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Assad rules out leasing land to Israel

JON IMMANUEL
and news agencies

SYRIAN President Hafez Assad and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat both condemned the Israel-Jordan draft agreement yesterday, while Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said that Syria was stubborn for rejecting it. "Our land is ours," Assad told reporters in Cairo, after meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. "We consider [that] it would be blasphemy for any country to speak of leasing its land to other leaderships. And I doubt anyone would intend that Syria would lease its land to Israel."

He was commenting on reports that Jordan will lease some land to Israeli farmers under the draft peace treaty it initiated on Monday. "Syria has remained alone in its hostility to Israel," Rabin said in London, after meeting British Prime Minister John Major at his official 10 Downing St. residence. "It is a mistake for Assad to stick to his stubbornness."

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said that Israel preferred its treaty with Jordan over its 1979 treaty with Egypt as a model for peace with Syria.

But Assad said: "Anyone who dreams... that Syria would lease its land is shamefully wrong and making a major mistake. If people adopt this theory, it will lead to the opposite of peace. There wouldn't be peace... even if we live tens or hundreds of years, unless the land is restored in full."

Assad said Arab states which have broken ranks and reached separate agreements with Israel had made a big mistake. "We have told them: 'You have made a mistake but we will not make a fuss. We will not fight you on this, although we believe you have done something wrong and have damaged collective action, but we wish you good luck,'" he said.

For Syria to obstruct the peace process would only do further damage to the reputation of the Arabs, he explained.

Arafat described section of the peace treaty on the status of Jerusalem's holy places as a "scandalous infringement" of the Israel-PLO accords.

"It contradicts UN resolutions," he said through the PLO's Wafa news agency. "It is an attempt to impose a permanent status of Israeli occupation on Jerusalem and its holy Islamic and Christian shrines. Meanwhile the dangerous cancer of the Israeli occupation is continuing in and around the city."

The treaty reiterates Israel's respect for "the special role" of Jordan in Jerusalem mentioned in the Washington Declaration of July 25.

Yesterday's Arab newspaper editorials, which appeared before Arafat's statement, were far less critical in their assessments.

Al-Kuds, considered firmly PLO, criticized the lack of coordination, but added that the treaty "will stir the stalemated state of peace negotiations."

An-Naba, which was closed for a month because of its enthusiastic support of the Israeli-Jordanian peace process, has moved at dramatic speed. "It was critical only of the fact that an Israeli official had said the treaty would weaken Syria's negotiating position."

Hamas denounced the agreement, saying it contradicted legitimate Palestinian and Arab rights. "Hamas' movement announces its rejection of this treaty and considers it to favor only the occupation enemy and contradict our legitimate Palestinian and Arab rights," Hamas said in a statement.

(Continued on Page 2)

Clinton hails nuclear pact with North Korea

WASHINGTON, (Reuters) - President Bill Clinton said last night his advisers unanimously approved of the US-North Korean nuclear pact and he has instructed his envoy to sign the agreement in Geneva on Friday.

Earlier story, Page 4



Former Syrian chief rabbi Avraham Hamra is surrounded by the press on his arrival at Ben-Gurion Airport yesterday. (Israel Sun)

Syrian chief rabbi gets rousing welcome

BATSHEVA TSUR

FORMER Syrian Chief Rabbi Avraham Hamra arrived here as an immigrant yesterday, symbolically transferring the spiritual center of his community from Damascus to Israel.

He received a tumultuous welcome from cabinet ministers and dignitaries, as well as a horde of shouting newsmen, as he stepped onto the tarmac at Ben-Gurion Airport. He was accompanied by members of his extended family, who arrived with him from New York.

Hamra, 51, had served as spiritual and communal leader in Syria for 25 years. He will now live in Holon, where there is a large Syrian community.

Reciting the *Shehehyanu* blessing, he expressed thanks to the governments of Israel, the US, Canada, and Syria, and to the Jewish Agency, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and the various other groups that made the exodus from Syria possible.

"I have spoken with President Hafez Assad, and we can look forward to new and good relations in the Middle East," Hamra said.

But he side-stepped reporters

questions about the political significance of the exodus, adding merely that the remaining 280 Jews in Syria are free to leave when they wish and that 16 had left Damascus the previous day. He said that the community's synagogues and cemeteries "would be all right" even though there is no longer a spiritual leader in Damascus.

Despite Hamra's reticence on the subject, his sister, Pina Neushan, a resident of Bat Yam for the past 20 years, said that he hoped to play a role in mediating peace with Syria.

Expectations of a political role were echoed by his mother, Esther. "He has great charisma and great pull," she said in perfect Hebrew, which she said she learned in childhood.

Hamra "managed to walk the fine tightrope between the Syrian reality and the Jewish community with good taste and wisdom," Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said in greeting him. He said Hamra had known how to provide his community with hope that there would eventually be a homecoming and

peace.

Because of the special circumstances under which 1,200 Syrian Jews arrived here since 1992, they have received extraordinary help with housing, and most of them have found apartments, Absorption Minister Yair Tzaban said, presenting Hamra with his immigrant's card.

"The message this proud leader brings with him is for the remainder of his community in New York to follow him," Acting Jewish Agency Chairman Yehiel Leket said. There are some 2,400 Jews who recently left Syria in New York, he said.

The agency has planted a forest in the name of the Syrian community, Aliya department head Uri Gordon added.

JDC executive vice-chairman Michael Schneider described how Hamra had overseen the funds sent to Damascus by the organization - to help the needy and provide communal and educational projects - "with courage and integrity."

Later, several hundred members of the Syrian community -

veterans as well as new olim - cheered and cried with joy as Hamra joined a celebration at the Holon headquarters of the Syrian Immigrants' Association.

A minute of silence was observed in memory of executed spy Eli Cohen and the fallen. Then flowers were distributed, the music and greetings began.

"At long last, we have come full circle," association head Moshe Sasson declared.

Meanwhile, Youssef Jajati, a wealthy businessman in Damascus, denied press reports that the community was leaving for Israel.

"These are completely baseless reports and are not true," Jajati told Reuters.

"We are still here engaging in our business as you can see. Our children are continuing their school studies. I have just returned from the morning prayers at the synagogue, and I did not hear that anyone is planning to leave."

"All of us have exit visas and nobody is forcing us to stay here. We are staying here because we love our country," he said.

Clinton may meet Assad after trip to Israel

Visits to Knesset, Yad Vashem planned

DAVID MAKOVSKY, HILLEL KUTTLER and news agencies

US President Bill Clinton is reportedly weighing whether to visit Syria as part of a Middle East tour, centering on next Wednesday's peace treaty signing at the Arava border crossing, just north of Eilat.

Israel's Ambassador to the US Itamar Rabinovich worked with US officials throughout the day and night yesterday to plan Clinton's schedule.

Clinton is set to depart Washington next Tuesday night, arriving in time for Wednesday's Arava ceremony.

The tentative schedule has the president spending half a day in Israel, where he will address the Knesset and visit Yad Vashem and various holy sites in Jerusalem. Israeli officials in Washington said.

Preliminary plans are for Clinton to head from Israel to Jordan, where he is to address parliament, and then fly to Kuwait for a visit with US troops deployed there following Iraq's recent military buildup.

Clinton may also stop briefly in Cairo on his return trip to the US on Saturday night, the officials added. His entire visit to the region will last three or four days.

Clinton will be the first president to visit since Jimmy Carter in 1979, when he personally negotiated the final touches of the Israel-Egypt peace treaty.

Then president Richard Nixon visited Syria and Israel in 1974 after the US brokered a disengagement agreement.

There is speculation that some of Clinton's advisers believe a visit to Syria would help peacemaking

efforts by underscoring US commitment to the Syrian track following the Israel-Jordan peace treaty. However, some advisers fear the political backlash of visiting a country on the State Department terrorism list on the eve of congressional elections.

It remains unclear whether Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak will attend the treaty signing. It also is unclear if PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat has been invited.

Israeli officials say the plan is for approximately 5,000 people to attend the ceremony. A large space is needed for that many people, and IDF sappers were at work yesterday defusing mines and clearing and paving the area.

As it stands now, Israel and Jordan would each be allotted 2,000 tickets, and the US would be given 1,000. It is believed that senators, congressmen, and delegations of Americans Jews will fly in for the event. A White House advance team of approximately 80 is to arrive shortly to discuss security and other logistic considerations.

Officials would like to host a gala dinner for Clinton, but said they cannot find a hall that could seat the estimated 1,000 people they would like to invite.

Police Inspector-General Assaf Hefetz yesterday ordered Operations Division head Cmdr. Danny Brinker to begin preparations for next week's events. A police spokesman said plans should be finalized by the start of next week.

In Amman yesterday, the cabinet unanimously endorsed the accord, setting the ground for the constitutional process of ratification by parliament and King Hussein before it takes effect. Parliament (Continued on Page 2)

Police to beef up security at Christian sites in capital

BILL HUTMAN

CERNED that Christian holy places in and around Jerusalem's Old City might become a target for terrorists, police recently decided to beef up security at the sites.

Police sources said that a special unit dedicated to guarding the Christian holy sites is likely to be established soon, as part of the effort to improve security.

They said the concern for attack was from both Jewish and Moslem extremists.

"Since the Hebron massacre, we have been saying to ourselves, what if something similar happened to us at one of the Christian holy sites in Jerusalem," one source said. "Even a small incident could have disastrous repercussions," as in addition to potential damage to life and property, an attack would scare away Christian visitors.

Police also wanted to have officers who are able to deal with the inter-Christian squabbles that of-

ten occur at churches controlled by more than one denomination on hand, the source added.

A Jerusalem police spokesman confirmed security would be tightened and manpower increased at the Christian holy sites. He added, however, that no decision was taken to set up a new unit.

Old City police chief David Givati recently met with city church leaders and reported to them on the police plans to improve security, sources at the meeting said.

The police sources, meanwhile, said largest concentration of police would be stationed at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Originally, the additional manpower was to be used only in the Old City. But a re-analysis of the situation, and talks with Christian leaders, also showed a need for more security at churches outside the walls.

'Most Israelis think Rabin should spurn Nobel Prize'

Jerusalem Post Staff

MOST Israelis think that Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres should not accept the Nobel Peace Prize.

This emerged from a telephone survey of 599 Hebrew-speaking Israelis, conducted by Gallup Israel on behalf of Independent Media Review and Analysis and *The Jerusalem Post* on Sunday and Monday evenings.

Only 44.6 percent of respondents believe that Rabin and Peres

should accept the prize.

The survey also found that 48.5% believe that the government

took "enough care" to achieve adequate security arrangements in the agreement with the PLO, and 49.2% believe it will see to adequate security arrangements on the Golan.

The survey was carried out the day after the Wachman kidnapp-

ing ended tragically and the day after the peace treaty with Jordan was initiated.

It found only small changes in the responses between the two days, indicating that the underlying positions of the public cannot be substantially changed even by dramatic events.

For example, on Sunday night, 42.1% thought Rabin and Peres

should accept the Nobel Peace Prize, compared to 47% after the treaty initiating.

On Sunday, 29.3% said they would vote for Labor if elections were held today; on Monday, 34.1%.

Before news of the peace with Jordan, 51.9% felt the government took "enough care" with security arrangements in Gaza-Jericho. This dropped to 45.4% after the initiating ceremony.

Herbalife salesmen said living off fat of the land

RAINE MARCUS

CUSTOMS and VAT officials are cracking down on distributors of Herbalife, many of whom they say are selling the vitamin potion without issuing receipts or paying VAT.

On Monday, VAT investigators nationwide began examining financial records of devotees of the vitamin and mineral-packed milk shakes and pills, said to be beneficial for dieters, anorexics and anyone needing a pick-me-up.

Each kit, which contains enough Herbalife for about a month, costs NIS 450, but users say that costs can be covered by selling other kits to friends, family and neighbors.

Would be distributors are invited to hear lectures about the wonders of Herbalife, originally established in California. Once convinced of its

properties, they are then encouraged to invest money in a number of kits at a wholesale price.

But the kit must be resold to individuals at the full NIS 450, according to company regulations, and VAT officials believe that

some distributors are earning a tidy sum without paying their dues.

A senior VAT official confirmed the nationwide crackdown, but the spokesperson denied that it was a "full-scale operation."

"We are examining whether a

few distributors have avoided paying VAT," she said. "But we are not examining the company, merely salespeople."

Those selling Herbalife "under the table" will not be arrested for VAT evasion, but may be forced from now on to start sharing their profits with authorities.

Israel Airports Authority

Ben-Gurion International Airport

Practice Alert at Ben-Gurion Airport

The management of the Ben-Gurion International Airport announces that a practice alert will be held at the airport today, Wednesday, October 19, 1994, during the afternoon. Civil defense, Magen David Adom and police units will take part in the exercise.

During the drill, controlled fires will be set, explosives detonated, and emergency and rescue vehicles will operate on the roads leading to the airport.

We apologize to the public for the temporary inconvenience. There will be no changes in flight schedules.

Spokesman's Bureau

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19101002

Palestinian election talks resume in Cairo

JON IMMANUEL

THE Cairo talks on Palestinian council elections resumed yesterday with a discussion on the structure of the council, indicating a shift by Israel towards Palestinian priorities.

The talks were suspended last Wednesday following the kidnapping of Nahshon Wachman, but reopened in an atmosphere described by both sides as good.

Dr. Saeb Erekat, the chief Palestinian negotiator, condemned Wachman's murder and then presented his side's concept of the council to be elected.

In the first five meetings Israel tried to steer the talks to technical election matters, infuriating Palestinian delegates who considered them secondary issues.

"If we can reach an agreement on content and structure of the council, all the other issues relating to the election law and so on will come easy, once we agree on what it is we are going to elect. I think the mere fact that we accepted to do this is a step in the right direction," Erekat said by phone from Cairo.

The Palestinians currently want a 100-member council with legisla-

tive and executive authority.

Hannie Yeshurun, the Israeli spokeswoman at the talks, said the Israeli delegation had changed and developed certain formulations during the talks, especially the conditions for participation in elections. "We are slowly learning," she said.

Erekat said false reports were distributed yesterday suggesting that the Palestinian Authority would accept limitations on the participation of opposition parties, notably Hamas.

The subject was not discussed yesterday, however Israel's current conditions - no call for Israel's destruction, no racist platform, no support for terrorism - are likely covered by the Palestinians' own draft election law, which does not permit participation by parties which advocate killing Jews.

Last week Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said after the unsuccessful raid to rescue Wachman that he did not expect the Palestinian Authority to suppress Hamas as a political party, but only as a terror organization, indicating he sees a distinction between the two.



British Prime Minister John Major greets visiting Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin yesterday. Rabin said he updated Major on recent developments in the peace process and promoted Israel's requests for full association with the European Union. Earlier, Rabin met with British lawmakers, telling them any international force placed on the Golan Heights in the context of a peace treaty would act only as a monitor and not as an active peacekeeper. Rabin is on a two-day visit that will include meetings with British leaders and Jewish fundraisers. (Reuters)

Bir Nabala death house sealed

THE IDF yesterday sealed the house in Bir Nabala where Nahshon Wachman was held hostage and murdered. The house belongs to a Palestinian family living in the US, whose members apparently did not know what use their tenants planned for it.

Jon Immanuel

Gaza police release 51 more Hamas detainees

JON IMMANUEL

GAZA police yesterday released 51 more detainees arrested after the kidnapping of Sgt. Nahshon Wachman, including four Reuters reporters.

Gaza police chief Brig. Ghazi Jabali said the 87 detainees remaining in Gaza Central Prison would likely be released, since no connection had yet been found between them and the kidnapping. This indicates that, together with the 50 released Monday, fewer than 200 were

originally arrested.

There were no demonstrations yesterday by Hamas activists demanding prisoner releases, following protests by thousands on Saturday and Monday.

Among those released were five members of the Democratic Front arrested after an earlier incident.

The Reuters reporters and photographers, including a brother of one of the kidnappers, had been released then rearrested, after police believed they had lied concerning their role in videotaping an abductor and releasing a tape of Wachman in Gaza. However, the police reached the conclusion that Hamas had given them false information to mislead the authorities, Jabali said.

The Gaza Center for Rights and Law yesterday called for the release of Palestinian prisoners in Israel, noting that the Wachman kidnapping has put the issue of prisoners on the agenda.

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

The weekly meeting of the English-speaking Jerusalem Rotary Club will take place today, 1 p.m., at the YMCA, King David Street.

ARRIVALS

World Wizo President Raya Jaglom, from Geneva.

With great sorrow we announce the passing of

ESTHER MANDEL

(Née Piratinsky)

Wife of **RAPHAEL MANDEL** ז"ל

The funeral will take place at Herzliya Cemetery at 3:30 p.m. today, Wednesday, October 19, 1994.

Deeply Mourned by:

Children: **Doreen and John Gainsford**

Susan and Jeffrey Mandel

Grandchildren: **Andrew Gainsford**

Laura and Ilan Geri

Raffi Mandel

Charlotte Mandel

Brother: **Philip Peratlin**

Sister: **Ann Taub**

Shiva at Rosemarie Court, Rehov Yehoshua Bin-Nin 2, Herzliya Pituah.

Kibbutz Negba

joins our member Zillah Cohen and family in sorrow at the death of her mother

HELEN WOOLFSON

passed away on Saturday October 15 in Bournemouth, England



THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

deeply mourns the passing of

ALFRED A. DAVIS

of Los Angeles and Atlanta

A dedicated benefactor and long-time friend of the University, who demonstrated profound concern for the young people of Israel

We extend our condolences to the family.

Rabin: Dealing with Jordan but thinking about Syria

COMMENT

DAVID MAKOVSKY

WHENEVER Likud MKs heckle Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin about being too soft in peace negotiations with Syria, the premier almost invariably shouts back - in an allusion to the Sinai withdrawal following Israel's 1979 peace treaty with Egypt - "You gave back the last grain of sand to the Egyptians. Don't talk."

Rabin would always complain about how that peace treaty set a precedent that has put Israel in a negotiating straitjacket with other Arab states, particularly Syria.

There are many reasons why Rabin has enjoyed making peace with Jordan, including the belief that separate treaties enables him to deal with Damascus from a better position of strength.

However, one should not overlook his obvious satisfaction in wriggling out of the strict Egyptian model of peacemaking, and being able to find creative solutions to sticky problems that could serve as a precedent for negotiations with Syria. One senses that Rabin was dealing with Amman, but always with an eye towards Damascus.

Rabin and Assad differ on the future of land, people, water, and normalized ties. Israeli officials still believe withdrawal from the Golan Heights will still be very deep, even after a peace treaty with Jordan; but creative arrangements worked out with Jordan this week set a precedent that could make the timing and shape of that withdrawal no longer a cut-and-dry affair.

Below are some novelties in Israel-Jordan peacemaking:

- Territorial exchange: While Rabin accepted the idea that Jordan would not lose an "inch" of an estimated 360 sq. km. of

claimed land, one novelty of the Israel-Jordan peace treaty is that it does not have to be the same land. A new principle of Middle East peacemaking is now "territorial exchange," or as Hussein put it, "minor border modifications." Israel keeps an estimated 30 sq. km. of cultivated farm land that was once Jordan's, and provides the Jordanians with border territory that was undisputedly Israel's.

- Leasing: Israel agreed to lease 2,000 dunams (500 acres) in the Arava and 800 dunams in the North for a 25-year period, with an option to renew. The territory would be owned by Jordan, but utilized by Israeli farmers. Golan settlers are likely to find hope in the idea.

- Water: Mindful that Syria would like shared water rights to the Kinneret, since the old border with Israel abuts the shore, Rabin was careful not to resolve the 40-year-old water dispute with Jordan by drawing from the Kinneret. Israel will be providing Jordan with water from other sources, and will agree to build dams together, but did not want the Kinneret touched.

- Embassies: Secretary of State Warren Christopher has spent months going back and forth between Jerusalem and Damascus without success to discuss whether a Syrian Embassy in Tel Aviv would open at the start, middle, or end of Israel's Golan withdrawal.

Israel and Jordan are to open embassies in each other's country a month after the treaty is ratified, before border implementation issues are finished eight months later.

er. This makes it much harder for Assad to assert that normalization of ties with Israel can only begin at the end.

In launching a diplomatic pre-emptive strike last night, Syrian President Hafez Assad rejected the idea that parts of the Golan were up for "rent." Whether Rabin's newly gained leverage is strong enough to prevail is open to question, but the premier now has a case to make on a variety of issues, as a precedent has been set.

Apart from the principles of peacemaking, one cannot ignore its timing. Officials deny that the treaty initialing was timed to "change the channel" after the failed IDF commando raid to rescue Cpl. Nahshon Wachman. They insist it occurred when Hussein agreed to accept the principle of swapping small parcels of land. Indeed, the juxtaposition of events is too tight to be merely coincidental. However, there is strong reason to believe that this is only a part of it: the second reason is mid-term elections in the US.

The Clinton administration leaned very heavily on the Gulf states to lift the secondary and tertiary Arab boycotts on Israel in advance of the elections, believing they must do everything possible to demonstrate foreign policy achievements, and one speculates to save the job of Christopher himself, who is rumored to be replaced next month.

Whether peace with Jordan has any electoral value in the American heartland is a separate issue, but Rabin would only be too happy to provide a pre-election present to a president considered by many to be the most pro-Israel in history. Now, Clinton, faced with problems at home, is coming next week for the photo-op.

CLINTON

(Continued from Page One) ment, dominated by conservative pro-establishment politicians, is expected to endorse the draft.

A lack of coordination with other Arab countries involved in the peace process prompted Jordan to forge ahead with a separate treaty, Prime Minister Abdul-Salam Majali said.

Majali urged Syria and Lebanon to follow Jordan's example "in order to reach a comprehensive settlement in the region."

He told a news conference that Jordan is satisfied with the accord, because it adequately addresses the issues of water and territorial rights.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Israel prefers the treaty with Jordan to its pact with Egypt as a model for peace with Syria. "From our logical viewpoint, [we prefer] the Jordanian agreement," he told Army Radio. "Jordan has not lost even one inch of land - it can say to the Arab world, 'Look, I conducted negotiations; I got all that was coming to me.'"

Jordanian and Israeli negotiators met in Akaba yesterday to thrash out some of the technical details of the peace treaty.

Bill Hutman contributed to this report.

NEWSLINE

with Dr. YOSSI OLMERT

Olmert is a former director of the Government Press Office and a leading expert on Syria.

Could the draft peace treaty with Jordan be used as the basis for a future accord with Syria, especially in terms of leasing land?

The Syrians will insist on a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan and on a return to the pre-1967 border rather than the international border dating back to the British Mandate period. There is no question mark with Jordan over normalization and implementation of the agreements.

Was King Hussein given any form of a green light by Hafez Assad to enable him to go ahead with the peace accord with Israel?

Hussein got a sort of green light, but he didn't really need one because he knows full well that he doesn't have a problem with Assad concerning the peace treaty with Israel. I heard this myself from Jordanians and from Syrians, and besides, the Syrian reaction to the peace treaty has been very mild, to say the least. There has been a bit of propaganda but nothing more than that. The Jordanians are convinced that peace between Israel and Syria is pending, and the Syrians won't be unhappy to be the last ones to make peace with Israel.

What is your knowledge of the Israeli position in the talks with Syria?

It's clear that Israel is trying to debate with the Syrians on the basis of the international border rather than the June 4, 1967, border. The points of dispute, which differ between these two borders, are the Hamat Gader and Banyas sites. Would a peace treaty with Syria automatically guarantee a peace accord with Lebanon and an end to the Hizbullah terror threat?

If we come to an agreement with Syria, it would also include Lebanon. Then the Syrians would have to make certain of Hizbullah once and for all. They might have to come to a military collision with them, which would quickly be decided in favor of the Syrians, although they might have to pay a political price vis-a-vis relations with Hizbullah's mentor, Iran. Alternatively, the Syrians might try to bribe Hizbullah with a bigger share of the Lebanese political pie. Either way, they would have to ensure that Hizbullah would only be a political movement and not a terrorist organization and that they can do. We have to ensure that all agreements are adhered to, although I would not volunteer to be an Israeli ambassador in Beirut.

David Rudge

Hizbullah: No Zionists allowed into Lebanon even with peace

DAVID RUDGE

HIZBULLAH leaders warned yesterday that "No Zionists will be allowed to enter Lebanon" even in the event of a peace treaty including Israel, Syria, and the Land of the Cedars.

Mohammed Yaghi, a member of the Lebanese parliament and a leading Hizbullah official, was quoted in the Lebanese press yesterday as saying that, if a peace agreement were reached between Lebanon and Israel it would be between governments and regimes, not the people themselves. "Even if the [regimes] decide on normalization, no Zionist will be allowed to enter Lebanon. We will chase them out and won't allow them to soil our land," Yaghi was quoted as saying.

In a similar vein, Hizbullah spiritual leader Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah said in an interview with a Lebanese newspaper that the "resistance will have achieved its goal once Israel withdraws from south Lebanon."

This did not mean, however, that resistance would cease. It would be directed against any attempts to normalize relations between Lebanon and Israel in the

event of a peace accord.

"The resistance might not be able to continue in its present form [after a peace treaty], but resistance can have other forms also," he said in an interview published in the *An-Nahar* newspaper.

It was not clear from his comments whether Fadlallah was referring to the possibility of armed or an aggressive political resistance to any normalization of ties, or even a combination of the two.

Meanwhile, Hizbullah's political leader, secretary-general Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, yesterday continued the extremist Shi'ite organization's psychological war against Israel's ally in the security zone, the South Lebanese Army.

"The collaborators of the Zionist enemy know that their end is near. If they are not killed today, they will be killed tomorrow. This is not a promise, but a decision of the Islamic Resistance," Nasrallah was quoted as saying in the Lebanese press.

Hizbullah has intensified attacks on the SLA and increased its propaganda campaign recently.

ASSAD

(Continued from Page One)

sent by fax to Reuters in Beirut. Mubarak was also dubious about the wisdom of leasing land to Israel - an idea that found no place in the peace treaty Egypt signed 15 years ago.

"Land is honor. I have said it before and there's no debate about it. I don't think Egypt would rent. It hasn't rented, and I don't think Syria would take that course, if this is true. But it's Jordan's affair," he said.

Assad threw little new light on US attempts to mediate a settlement on the Golan Heights, and he played down any suggestion that Syria and Israel were making much progress.

"There is an exchange of views on our side and on the side of the

other party, but we are still at the stage of testing the pulse and exploring," he said.

"In reality we did not reach definite agreements on any issue, but we are still continuing negotiations on peace. Talk about phases [of withdrawal] has come up, but we have not reached any result or any agreement on this. We have our own point of view and they have another point of view."

Mubarak said he remains optimistic about the prospects for peace, but joined Assad in trying to discourage excessive expectations.

"As for a solution between Syria and Israel, it will take its time. Optimism does not mean it will be solved tomorrow or the day after," he said.

The Israel N.F. (Neurofibromatosis) Organization announces that its

Annual Conference

will take place on Tuesday, November 1, at 4:15 p.m., at Beit Hasofer, 6 Kaplan, Tel Aviv.

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Bezek director-general Yitzhak Kaul explains the damage caused by yesterday's fire to Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni. (Israel Sun)

Right-wing arsonists suspected of destroying Bezek facility

AN apparent arson attack against a telephone switching center in Petah Tikva, by right-wing extremists, early yesterday morning caused an estimated \$8 million in direct damage, Bezek said yesterday.

Damage to the switching equipment disconnected 25,000 phone lines in Petah Tikva.

Bezek became aware of the incident at 3:30 a.m., when smoke alarms went off at the site. The fire department, police, and dozens of Bezek workers were notified and rushed to the scene.

On the wall of the building, someone had spray-painted the words: "The Jewish intifada has begun. The entire state of lawless will go up in fire. Kahane people and Judea and Sa-

JUDY SIEGEL and RAINE MARCUS

maria. The dog Yitzik (sic) Rabin equals Hitler; the time will come when we get even with him."

Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni, who visited the facility, said: "Whoever committed this act of vandalism is not only the enemy of peace, but even more so an enemy of the public who belongs behind bars. Only terrorists are able to disconnect 25,000 homes with children, old people, factories, and hospitals."

Bezek director-general Yitzhak Kaul set up a special team to work around the clock to restore phone service in the area. He

apologized for the damage caused by the arsonists.

Companies, institutions and other large customers will be connected to other switching centers until equipment is replaced. Bezek intends to install a digital switching system that was to be used elsewhere, to replace the destroyed facility.

A special police squad has been formed to investigate the incident described by Sharon police chief Dep. Cmdr. Bertie Ohayon as "very serious."

"We must ensure that this type of anti-establishment incident does not recur in other fields or against other government establishments," he said.

Tel Aviv District Court alimony records torched

POLICE are searching for a man who, apparently fed up with paying alimony to his former wife, torched the Tel Aviv District Court archives early yesterday. Some 5,000 alimony and divorce files were destroyed.

It took firefighters, who reportedly arrived a few minutes after the fire broke out at around 4 a.m., two hours to extinguish the blaze. Investigators found signs of

RAINE MARCUS

a burglary and traces of gasoline at the scene.

Police detained two night watchmen who were on duty at the time, but later released them. One had been sleeping when the fire started, said police, and the other had apparently taken a walk outside. Police arriving at the scene awakened the sleeping guard.

Court officials said that all records of divorce agreements and alimony payments were recently computerized and that no one would escape payments because of the blaze.

"It's like looking for a needle in a haystack," said a police officer. "It could have been anyone who is ordered by the court to pay alimo-

ny - and there are thousands of them."

Meanwhile, nine people were slightly injured when a fire broke out at a silversmith's workshop on Tel Aviv's Shoenet Street yesterday afternoon. They were taken to Ichilov and Wolfson hospitals, suffering from smoke inhalation.

Police said the fire was caused by a short circuit in a vacuum cleaner.

Legal loophole exploited for import of non-kosher meat

EVELYN GORDON

RELIGIOUS MKs are up in arms over the government's use of a loophole in the law to allow the import of non-kosher meat.

Meanwhile, the Knesset Economics Committee as a whole was outraged to discover that the Industry and Trade Ministry has already granted licenses for importing 80 tons of kosher and non-kosher chilled meat, even though the deadline for submitting bids expired only on Monday.

Committee chairman Gideon Patt (Likud) said that unless the ministry can explain why it failed to wait for the deadline to expire, he will ask the state comptroller to investigate. Last night, the Knesset, with the support of the government, passed a bill preventing the import of non-kosher frozen meat. Shas had demanded this law as part of its price for rejoining the coalition.

However, the Industry and Trade Ministry recently issued licenses for the import of non-kosher chilled meat - meat not kept quite cold enough to meet the technical definition of frozen. The Agriculture Ministry, which recommended the move, told the Economics Committee that it advocated the move to keep meat prices down.

Religious MKs were outraged over the matter. "Somebody here did everything to deceive the committee," said Moshe Gafni (United Torah Judaism).

"It's clear that the Knesset's intent was for all frozen meat," agreed Haiman Porat (National Religious Party).

Gafni said he has already submitted a bill to amend the law, and Aryeh Gamil (Shas) said he intends to do the same.

In addition, Gamil said, Aryeh Dori (Shas) has spoken to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and "the prime minister promised to take care of the matter."

"This is a grave violation of the status quo," he said. Porat said the key to changing the law was Shas.

"This is a big test for Shas," he said. "If it supports such an amendment, there's a good chance it will pass."

Smoking ban takes effect today

JUDY SIEGEL

rection of an erroneous story that claimed non-smokers could forfeit their right to breathe clean air if asked to do so by their smoking colleagues at work. The ministry said it saw no reason to issue a clarification to all the news media.

According to the new law, only rooms occupied solely by smokers may be declared a smoking room; if any non-smokers work there, it may not serve as a smoking room, even if they are willing (or pressed) to allow smokers to light up.

The Yediot article falsely claimed that the premier could persuade his fellow ministers to turn the cabinet room into a smoking room.

The Israel Society for the Prevention of Smoking said the error

could create a dangerous false impression among the public and neutralize the law. The possibility of non-smokers forfeiting the rights was debated and rejected by the Knesset Labor and Social Affairs Committee, which unanimously approved the regulation.

If non-smokers could forfeit their rights, said the association, unborn fetuses in pregnant women would be subjected unwillingly to damaging smoke, non-smoking workers could sue their employers for damages if they developed diseases as a result of exposure to smoke, and bosses who smoke could force unwilling non-smoking employees to jeopardize their health.

The Histadrut sent messages yesterday to all unions and labor councils, asking them to ensure that the new regulation is enforced in work places.

American suspected of smuggling gold remanded

RAINE MARCUS

AN American citizen, found carrying 25 kg. of pure gold at Ben-Gurion Airport on Sunday night, was remanded for four days by Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yesterday.

Customs officials believe Dan Trabalo may have smuggled in gold and foreign currency at least 29 times during the last two years.

He was caught with the gold hidden in a special vest. He passed through the "nothing to declare" line, but customs officials decided to search his luggage. At first they found nothing, but became suspicious when he

appeared nervous and started sweating. A body search revealed a vest containing 25 gold nuggets weighing 1 kg. each, and valued at nearly NIS 100,000.

A Customs and VAT representative told the court that Trabalo had admitted buying the gold in Switzerland, but refused to say who the potential buyer here was.

Trabalo, said investigators, had traveled to Switzerland via Ben-Gurion Airport 29 times over the past two years. Each time he stayed abroad for a few days.

5 Palestinians held on suspicion of planting bombs

DAVID RUDGE

POLICE have arrested five Palestinians from northern Samaria on suspicion of planting bombs in the Mount Gilboa region and vandalizing agricultural equipment and produce.

The five were arrested when police and security forces raided their homes in Jilaboun village, across the Green Line, following intensive intelligence gathering work.

Two home-made pipe bombs, packed with nails, were discovered in the fields of kibbutz

Ma'aleh Gilboa in the past two weeks. One of the devices was detonated, without causing any injuries or damage, while the other was neutralized by police sappers.

The latest incident occurred late last Thursday night and, as in the previous incident, led to the area being sealed off while a search was made and the device safely destroyed.

On both occasions, leaflets

signed by Izzadin Kassam, the military arm of the extremist Hamas group, were found near the devices.

The intensive police inquiries led to Jilaboun village, in northern Samaria, but only a relatively short distance across the Green Line from Ma'aleh Gilboa.

Police said the suspects had already admitted causing damage to agricultural equipment and produce of Ma'aleh Gilboa and other Jewish settlements along and inside the Green Line.

TA Performing Arts Center set to open

HELEN KAYE

THE Tel Aviv Performing Arts Center (TAPAC) will have its opening gala on October 23 in the presence of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, followed the next night by the opera *Boris Godunov*.

Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo said that the opening "comes at a particularly hopeful time in the Middle East peace process," and that the new opera house "will put Tel Aviv on the map of the world's great cultural centers."

TAPAC comprises a NIS 150 million, 1,600 seat, state-of-the-art opera house, which is home to the New Israeli Opera and will also host dance, classical music, and theater performances.

Milo also said that TAPAC must be for everybody, not "just an elite, and I hope that artists like Boaz

Sharabi and Arik Einstein will also sing from this stage."

To date the complex, which includes commercial buildings and a parking lot, has cost some \$70 million. When finished, at an estimated additional cost of \$40 million, the complex will have two more theaters and a concert hall.

NIO and TAPAC general manager Uri Ofer said that contrary to some reports, the Tel Aviv taxpayer has had to fork out for only 50% of the opera's NIS 150m. price tag. The rest has come from participating business interests, the Tel Aviv Foundation, the municipality, and an NIS 50 m. Treasury loan which, according to former mayor Shlomo Lahat, may be converted to a grant.

Killer of wrong man gets life sentence

A LOD man was sentenced to life imprisonment for murder by Tel Aviv District Court yesterday.

Zori Daznastvili, 25, was convicted of killing Shai Sabah. He actually intended to kill Saadia Ben-Hamo, with whom he had quarreled over drugs, but when he followed Ben-Hamo's car and forced it to stop on November 1, 1993, he mistakenly shot Sabah,

who was in the passenger seat.

In another case, Konstantin Unguriani, 33, a construction worker from Romania, was sentenced to 14 years in prison by Tel Aviv District Court for killing his roommate.

On the night of July 12, Unguriani quarreled with his roommate, who objected to his loud behavior. He stalked out of the

apartment, returning three hours later with an iron bar.

He then entered the room of the sleeping Nicksa Fendel, and hit him in the head several times with the bar. Fendel died from his injuries two weeks later.

Unguriani had originally been charged with murder, but the charge was reduced to manslaughter in a plea bargain. (Itim)

Conference on Arab rights slated for Nazareth

DAVID RUDGE

A CONFERENCE relating specifically to the problems of Israeli Arabs is to be held in Nazareth over the weekend.

The convention - reported to be the first of its kind ever held here - will deal with discrimination by governmental and public bodies against the Arab community.

Representatives of human rights bodies in America and Europe, as well as from the UN, are scheduled to attend the three-day event, which is to begin on Saturday.

Organizers said that recommendations for eliminating discrimination and correcting the present imbalance in the level of services in Arab communities compared to those in Jewish areas would be submitted to the government.

The event is being organized by the Association of Forty, which fights for the rights of unrecognized Arab villages, in conjunction with the Galilee Society, an Arab human rights body which provides voluntary medical and health services in Arab communities, and the fund for promoting technological education in the Arab sector.

Organizers said the conference would concentrate on discrimination health, education, local authority budgets, land expropriation, and the plight of villages which have no basic amenities, such as running water and electricity, because they are not recognized as legal settlements.

Israeli Arab experts in these and other fields will submit documents supporting the allegations of discrimination and recommendations for improving the situation.

Conference coordinator Khalel Khalil, of the Association of Forty, said government ministers and officials, including President Ezer Weizman, had been invited.

The conference follows the recent participation of Association of Forty chairman and founder Mohammed Abu Hija in an UN-sponsored conference in Geneva on the rights of minorities.

Experts claim mastectomies will soon become obsolete

JUDY SIEGEL

MASTECTOMIES will soon be a thing of the past, according to foreign cancer experts here for a conference.

Nine experts from the US, Britain, and Italy have been delivering lectures on the latest developments in breast cancer at a symposium organized by the Israel Cancer Association, the Albert Einstein School of Medicine in New York, the European School of Oncology, and the Israel Medical Association.

Dr. Umberto Veronesi of the Milan Oncology Institute said that even women with large tumors will not have to undergo the radical surgery. "We can use chemotherapy to shrink the size of existing tumors, and then perform less drastic operations that will leave the patient with most of her breast," he said. "In Europe, mastectomy is disappearing."

Prof. Michael Baum of the Royal Marsden Hospital in England said long-term survival rates of women who undergo more conservative operations are no lower than those who have radical mastectomies.

Of 2,000 women in a randomized clinical trial, those with tumors of up to three centimeters in size who had the partial operation fared as well as those who had the entire breast removed, said Baum. Post-menopausal women may need only radiotherapy and not even chemotherapy, he said.

Dr. Gianni Bonadonna of the Milan institute added that chemotherapy is needed by six or seven out of 10 breast-cancer patients to kill off cancer cells sent out by the initial tumor that may reach other tissues and organs. Chemotherapy can reduce mortality rates, he said, by 35 percent over 20 years.



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North Korea accord 'should end nuclear dispute'

CLARE NULLIS
GENEVA

NORTH Korea's top negotiator said yesterday a new accord with the United States should end nuclear tensions "once and for all."

Kang Sok Ju said it would resolve the mistrust between Washington and Pyongyang.

"I hope the improving of bilateral relations will make a significant contribution to peace in Asia and the rest of the world," said Kang, Vice Foreign Minister.

Chief US negotiator Robert L. Gallucci went back to Washington to brief Congress and the Clinton administration on the details.

Subject to approval by the capitals, Gallucci and Kang will sign the deal in Geneva on Friday.

The accord broadly commits North Korea to opening its nuclear facilities to international inspection, rejoining the nuclear non-proliferation treaty which bans the spread of weapons, and scrapping old-fashioned atomic power plants which can produce the bomb-making ingredient plutonium.

In return, the United States offers diplomatic links and North Korea will be given two modern light-water atomic reactors to replace its old-fashioned graphite-moderated ones.

The agreement fleshes out one reached in August. Neither side commented on the details.

Gallucci called the accord "broadly acceptable and positive."

"I personally think it is a good agreement," Gallucci said at a midnight news conference. "I think it is in the interest of international security, of our international non-proliferation regime."

There are fears that North Korea has already produced at least one atomic bomb, although Pyongyang insists its nuclear program is only for peaceful purposes.

"I am convinced this agreement when implemented will help resolve the so-called nuclear issue once and for all," Kang told reporters outside the North Korean diplomatic mission.

In Seoul, South Korean officials said the agreement was a good start but fell short of expectations.

In particular, Foreign Minister Han Sung-joo said his government was unhappy that North Korea will get several years before it has to allow special inspections of two suspected nuclear waste sites.

The West fears the sites are being used to store nuclear waste that would prove Pyongyang has been secretly developing a bomb. North Korea maintains the sites are for conventional military uses and so are off limits to international checks.

In the August talks, North Korea agreed in principle to the special inspections. The subsequent quarrels were over timing as it wanted to ensure it first got hold of new nuclear technology as a reward.

State-run KBS television in South Korea said that under the deal, the North would get two modern 1,000-megawatt nuclear reactors by 2003, worth about \$4 billion. These would be built by South Korea, it said.

The North initially held out against reactors provided by its southern arch-enemy.

KBS, which said it had a copy of the agreement, said Washington would open a diplomatic liaison office and gradually ease restrictions on trade and investment.

The US administration insisted that Pyongyang resume the stalled dialogue with the South as part of the diplomatic package, according to South Korean media reports.

There have been no diplomatic links since the 1950-53 Korean war. After more than four decades of self-imposed isolation and growing economic problems, Pyongyang is now anxious for more contact with the outside world.

Kim Jong Il, the son of late leader Kim Il Sung, appeared in public Sunday for the first time since his father's funeral in July, signaling that he has taken control and ending speculation about a power struggle. (AP)

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A lone Kuwaiti soldier prays in the northern desert against a background of tire tracks left by military vehicles. (Reuters)

Iraq says UN resolution on troops is 'interference'

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - Iraq, having stopped short of recognizing Kuwait, complained yesterday against a UN resolution restricting its troop movements.

After striking a conciliatory tone on Monday, editorials in the government-controlled media denounced the resolution as a violation of Iraq's sovereignty.

"The call is a blatant interference in Iraq's internal affairs," the government newspaper *al-Jumhuriya* said.

The resolution said Iraq could not reinforce its troops in the south and risked a Western military response if it did so.

It followed several days of tension that began with an Iraqi troop build-up near Kuwait, which Iraq invaded in 1990 and occupied for seven months, and led to a huge US military deployment in the region before the Iraqis pulled back.

Jumhuriya had described the resolution as "positive" on Monday but explained its switch of stance yesterday by saying this referred to Iraq's fight to have UN trade sanctions eased or lifted.

"The contents of the resolution are obviously negative," it said.

It was also difficult to interpret how close Iraq might be to recognizing Kuwait - a main UN demand

if the sanctions imposed after the 1990 invasion are to be lifted.

A special session of the Iraqi parliament was called on Monday amid speculation recognition was imminent. It was not revealed if this was even discussed.

The body, dominated by the ruling Baath Party, voted to back President Saddam Hussein in his handling of the dispute.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev last week secured a pledge from Baghdad to recognize the oil-rich emirate, which it claims was historically part of its territory. (Background, Page 5)

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Bosnian Serbs kill UN aid driver

SARAJEVO (Reuters) - Bosnian Serbs attacked a UN aid convoy, killing one driver and wounding another yesterday, but peacekeepers decided against hitting back with a punitive NATO air strike.

They said Serb forces promised not to reopen fire on a British UN patrol ordered to recover vehicles abandoned during the shooting near Gorazde in eastern Bosnia.

A UN source in Sarajevo said an air strike "was considered but quickly discarded...We'll see what happens. Air strikes may be considered again today depending on how the situation develops."

The convoy was riddled with gunfire on the edge of the 20 km radius heavy weapons exclusion zone around the UN-protected Muslim town of Gorazde east of Sarajevo.

It happened less than 24 hours after Bosnian Serb gunmen in the capital hijacked five truck loads of

medicines from the UN, whose aid efforts in Bosnia have been systematically disrupted for weeks.

UN peacekeepers, fearing retaliation from the better-armed Serbs, are resisting pressure from NATO for more aggressive use of air power when the UN or the Muslim enclaves in Serb territory are attacked.

UN spokesman Paul Risley said the convoy's remaining drivers and accompanying soldiers were out of danger.

Aid officials seeking the return of the hijacked medicines said the commander of the Bosnian Serb army, General Ratko Mladic, had promised the cargo would be returned.

The medicines were seized by about 10 Bosnian Serb soldiers, some armed with shoulder-launched anti-tank missiles, while the convoy was on its way from the airport to a city centre warehouse.

Norway TV dumps 'Power Rangers' following death

OSLO (AP) - A Scandinavian TV network dropped the wildly popular US children's show "Power Rangers" yesterday following the beating death of a 5-year-old girl by her playmates, officials said.

The girl, Silje Marie Redergard, was found frozen to death Saturday on a playground in the western Norwegian town of Trondheim after being viciously stoned and kicked by her three playmates, police said yesterday.

"A combination of factors contributed to the death, but according to the preliminary autopsy report, the actual cause of death was extreme hypothermia," said Harald Moholt of the Trondheim police by telephone.

There were no reports that the boys, one age 5 and two 6, were influenced by the program, which features a group of everyday youths who can turn into

fighters to battle their enemies, often in hand-to-hand combat.

Swedish and Norwegian newspapers reported yesterday that the three boys and the girl in the past often did play in imitation of another children's TV program, "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles," which also features hand-to-hand combat.

The death stunned parents and officials in Norway and neighboring Sweden, where a debate already has been simmering about the effect of television violence on children.

The Swedish-owned TV3, a Scandinavian satellite television network with operations based in London, decided to suspend broadcasts of the program "Power Rangers" to its subscribers in Norway, Sweden and Denmark amid the intensifying debate over the girl's death.

Charles: Whining wimp or brave prince?

LONDON (AP) - Self-pitying wimp or courageous captive of regal destiny?

Prince Charles' future subjects are divided as they feast on an official biography revealing the man born to be king as an unhappy child and an anguished husband trapped into a loveless marriage.

Lawyers for the couple said yesterday there was "no truth" in reports Charles and Diana have agreed to get a divorce and a financial settlement.

The lawyers issued a joint statement after a French weekly, *Voiix*, said Diana was to get a 24-million pound (\$38.5 million) payoff. The weekly said the material came from a book to be published next month on Diana.

But while doubts remained about a royal divorce, the Charles biography left few with any doubts the marriage is truly over.

The prince's aides hope his candor will boost his public image. So far, much reaction is hostile and the gamble isn't paying off.

Newspapers which invited readers to call in reported yesterday, three days after *The Sunday Times* published the first extract from *The Prince of Wales*, that calls were running two-thirds against Charles, with increasing sympathy for Diana.

"This Faustian pact with his (press) enemies is more likely to end in immolation than justifica-

tion," columnist Hugo Young wrote in London's *Guardian*.

Andrew Marr of *The Independent* accused the prince of "gushing out... misery and self-pity... an unconvincing figurehead for a healthy country."

The prince's aides concede reaction has been diverse at best. "We've had a sprinkling of phone calls and I must say they are mixed," Alan Percival, a spokesman for the prince, told the AP.

"Some just wanted to emphasize their support for the Prince of Wales, others thought making the documents available to an author may have been a mistake."

Charles made thousands of his private letters and diaries available to the author, broadcaster Jonathan Dimbleby. The prince, Percival said, had no regrets about cooperating for the biography.

In the biography, Charles makes clear he never loved Diana; felt pushed into proposing by his overbearing father, and then was trapped in marriage with a self-centered, jealous and neurotic young wife.

In a television interview with Dimbleby in June, Charles acknowledged he was unfaithful to Diana, but said it was only after the marriage broke down. After that interview, his public ratings rose.

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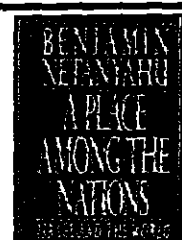
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Thatcher scandal is a threat to the House of Fahd

CON COUGHLIN
RIYADH

THE discomfort Lady Thatcher suffered last week following allegations that her son Mark had made £12 million (NIS 58m.) in commissions from Saudi Arabia will have done little to improve the health of King Fahd, Saudi Arabia's aging monarch.

After 12 years on the throne of the world's wealthiest oil state, King Fahd is more than feeling his 78 years. His health is so frail that he is hardly able to stand for more than a few minutes.

His close advisers have become concerned that the man who personally controls the enormous wealth that gushes from the nation's vast oil reserves is showing the first signs of senility.

When asked to take decisions on important issues of state, the king has a disconcerting habit of lapsing into a rambling speech about the state of his arthritic knees.

The furor surrounding Mark Thatcher's alleged involvement in Britain's £20 billion (NIS 96.6b.) deal to sell Tornado jet fighters to Saudi Arabia will not have been well received by the king.

It was, after all, his personal decision to authorize the biggest defense deal in British history. He did so in the face of fierce competition from the US and, to a lesser extent, France.

He opted for Britain as a personal favor to Mrs. Thatcher, whom he warmly admired. And in a country where corruption is rife, and few among the country's 5,000 Saudi princes decline a bribe, a payment of a £12m. commission to the son of a leading international dignitary would not have warranted much attention.

What will have caused the king even more distress, however, is the fact that the person responsible for alleging Mark Thatcher's involvement in the arms deal did so with the express intention of removing the king from his throne.

Mohammed Khilewi, the 33-year-old Saudi who made the claims, is an unlikely dissident.

The scion of a respected Saudi family, Khilewi enjoyed a privileged education before entering the diplomatic service. He was quickly adopted as a protégé of Prince Saud al-Faisal, the Saudi foreign minister, and before long found himself appointed to the diplomatic services' more prestigious posts.

At the time of his dramatic defection last spring, Khilewi was working with the Saudi delegation to the UN in New York. Since then, he has made a succession of lurid allegations about the secret undertakings of his former paymasters,

each designed to cause his monarch intense embarrassment.

But while his allegations have been carefully designed to attract the optimum amount of publicity, there has been little scrutiny of either the validity of his claims or his motives in seeking his monarch's overthrow.

In fact, for all the publicity, much of what Khilewi has alleged is either old hat or, when put in context, fairly predictable.

Apart from claims that the house of Saud was guilty of corruption and human rights abuses — all chestnuts which have definitely seen better days — Khilewi's first major denunciation of the Saudi royal family concerned his claim that they had funded Iraq's nuclear program during the 1980s.

For anyone familiar with the turbulence which affected the region at that time, this is not surprising. For Iraq, Saudi Arabia's neighbor and then ally, was involved in a brutal confrontation with Iran, and the Saudi monarchy was terrified the war would spread to its territory, with Iran seizing control of

Saudi Arabia's oil fields.

It was well known at the time the Saudis were quietly leading Iraq any possible assistance, from access to its air bases on the coast to financial support.

If part of Iraq's defense strategy were to develop a nuclear capability, then the billions of dollars donated by the Saudis would inevitably be diverted to fund it. In any event, the Iraqis did not get very far with their nuclear development. Most of it was destroyed by Israel's bombing raid.

Khilewi's next attempt to embarrass the Saudi royal family was to claim that his country funded terrorist attacks on Jews by providing financial support to radical Islamic groups such as Hamas.

Saudi Arabia's support for radical Moslems has never been in doubt. The country is known for conducting radical Islamic practices such as public beatings, stonings and amputations.

And ever since the creation of the Israeli nation, successive Saudi monarchs have funded any Arab nation or organization that was prepared to wage war against the Israelis.

With his latest allegations, however, Khilewi is clearly attempting to provoke the collapse of the Saudi house of cards.

While most of the publicity has centered on Thatcher's role, Khilewi's main purpose in making public tape recordings of the secret negotiations that led to the deal is further to discredit King Fahd.

According to Mohammed al-Massari, head of the London-based Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights, an exiled Saudi opposition group, the amount of money paid to Mark Thatcher, if true, is insignificant when compared with the amounts paid to members of the royal family.

"If Mark Thatcher was paid £12m., then that's peanuts," said al-Massari. "The level of corruption in Saudi Arabia is so extensive that you have to talk in terms of billions, not millions."

For example, research carried out by al-Massari's organization has estimated that a few members of the Saudi royal family, including the king, made more than £25b. during the Gulf War by charging exorbitant prices for supplying basic items.

"There is a small clique within the higher echelons of the Saudi royal family who have made vast fortunes by corrupt

means. King Fahd is as guilty as any of them, and that is why he should go," he said.

The Saudi royal family is no stranger to controversy. In 1964, King Saud was forced to abdicate by other members of the royal family because of his incompetence, and in 1975 King Faisal was assassinated by one of his nephews.

Similarly the pressure being applied against King Fahd should also be seen in terms of an inter-family power struggle. Even if it is not possible to force the king's abdication, he clearly does not have much longer to live, and rival factions within the Saudi royal family are already starting to maneuver themselves into a position whereby they can contest the succession.

One possibility is that Khilewi himself is playing a key role in this struggle, and that he has the full backing of a powerful faction within the royal family to denounce the king.

"The Saudi royal family moves in mysterious ways," said al-Massari.

"I would be very surprised if Khilewi is not the puppet of a contender for the Saudi throne. In which case the only outcome of the present crisis is that one corrupt Saudi king will be replaced by another." (Daily Telegraph)



Three of the nine prisoners sentenced to death for plotting the assassination of ex-US President George Bush last year talk to their lawyer at Kuwait City's Judicial Palace on Monday. The trial has been adjourned until November 14. (AP)

Kuwaiti allies' effectiveness in doubt

WILLIAM MACLEAN
KUWAIT

FOR all the backslapping among Western nations that rushed to Kuwait's aid during its border crisis with Iraq, awkward questions remain about the military effectiveness of allied support for the emirate.

One of the major findings is that Iraqi troops posed a clear threat to Kuwait's far northern areas for about 72 hours before the US and Britain rushed in land, sea and air forces, diplomats said.

The 72-hour gap, timed by one analyst from midday on October 7 to midday on October 10, was long enough to cause some sober reflection among Western allies, they said, even though any advance would have been driven back in days.

The first US ground forces arrived on October 11.

"There was a distinct, real threat on the ground. Whether or not they had the intent to invade is another question, and we will probably never know the answer," one diplomat said.

"There was an unnecessary long gap. There was a window," one military expert said.

"Information was available which may not have been acknowledged with the speed it should have been. By the second or the third [of October], there

was hard information available [about the start of the Iraqi buildup]," the expert said.

Kuwait acknowledges there was a threat, but says its forces and US air power already in the region could have coped.

The crisis began when Iraq pushed 80,000 troops toward the Kuwait border, apparently to draw world attention to its demands for easing trade sanctions imposed by the UN after its 1990 invasion. The Iraqis have now withdrawn.

Concern focused on 15,000 Republican Guards, the best equipped forces in Iraq.

American officials have said that under a 1991 defense cooperation pact they will deploy forces in Kuwait long before Iraq can move troops to a threatening position on the border.

But analysts said 72 hours was an uncomfortably long period of exposure, particularly as Kuwait's devastated military was still in the early days of rehabilitation from the 1990-91 occupation.

Kuwait says its 150 tanks and 40 warplanes could have forced an

invading column to break into tactical formation, slowing its advance and making it more vulnerable to air attack.

But in the early days of the crisis there was insufficient US air power in the region definitely to block an Iraqi advance. More ground forces were needed, diplomats said.

KUWAIT is rebuilding its armed forces, but even when its 10-year program of rearmament is completed early next century, it will still have to rely partly on outside help to repel any intruder.

One diplomat said that if an advance had occurred between October 7 and 10, Iraq "might have taken some northern oilfields and perhaps Bubiyan Island" before they were recaptured.

Some analysts say apparent delay in acting on intelligence information gave Iraq a window of opportunity.

While US spy planes fly over the area every day, there is some doubt whether there was continuous satellite cover in the early stages.

"Once satellite photographs became available, everything changed," one of the sources said. (Reuters)

Effects of embargo take their toll on Iraqis

EDWIN CHEN
BAGHDAD

ONE are the heady days filled with bellicose talk of Iraq's having annexed Kuwait as its 19th province. Gone from the street markets are the mountains of loot taken from Kuwait. The gritty reality today on Baghdad's streets is the harshness created by the trade embargo.

The souks no longer brim with bins of pistachios, almonds and raisins, sides of mutton and lamb, Western cigarettes and a profusion of consumer electronics equipment.

Instead, the weekend flea market downtown has become nothing but a sprawling bazaar of old clothes and castaway household knickknacks that can be sold for food money.

From the empty open-air fish cafes along downtown Baghdad's riverfront to the forlorn outpost near the Jordanian border, the ravages of Iraq's Gulf war defeat and the ensuing grinding economic sanctions are evident all around.

On the sidewalks, and in the narrow, dusty alleys, the beleaguered vendors are lucky to have a few open packs of cigarettes to peddle.

one cigarette at a time.

Along busy Sadoun Street, a few fruit and vegetable stands remain, but most Baghdadis hardly cast a glance, as they grimly go about their business.

"It looks good, but all that is out of reach for most Iraqis," said one European diplomat here this week.

SUCH jarring contrasts between past affluence and present hardship are everywhere in this nation of 18 million people almost four years after Iraq's defeat, followed by the most severe international economic embargo in recent history.

An ailing 60-year-old grandfather, call him Adnan, confided in the dark of night that he is working harder than ever. He would prefer not to. But he still has a wife and five daughters at home, the youngest only eight.

Life has been especially tough, he sighed, after food prices shot up by 300 percent in 1993.

And just this month, the government reduced food-ration packages of rice, flour, oil, sugar and the like by more than 35 percent.

To make ends meet, Adnan shuttles passengers between Baghdad and Amman — a rugged 12-hour drive across the desolate Syrian desert — always stuffing his trunk on the return trip with goods regularly available in Jordan.

The only thing that remains cheap in Iraq, he said with a laugh, is gasoline.

With rampant inflation, an unprecedented black-market currency exchange is flourishing, with transactions often conducted with the furtiveness of major drug deals, complete with calls made from pay phones and late-night rendezvous in shadowy neighborhoods.

"You may not need a cart to carry all your dinars, but a sack helps," quipped one Eastern European diplomat here.

Only four years ago, the Iraqi

dinar commanded as much as \$3; now each dollar can fetch up to 600 dinars in the right places. Inflation has reached 24,000% a year, even by a recent official estimate.

A restaurant meal (with no liquor, which has been banned) now can cost 3,000 dinars or more — probably beyond the reach of most of Baghdad's seven million residents, who subsist largely on fixed incomes. Two chickens, for example, may deplete an average schoolteacher's monthly income.

Still, the greatest wariness among Iraqis seems reserved for the possibility of new military confrontation against a US-led coalition.

Near the Jordanian border crossing, a young Iraqi customs official, stamping entry approval on a passport, whispers to an American: "No war with Iraq. Please? War no good."

He leans forward from behind a grimy counter and is about to say more but pulls back as a coworker passes. The clerk quickly returns to his task, scooping up the next batch of passports for processing. (Los Angeles Times)

Naqsh: The Yemeni stimulant

ASSEM ABDEL-MOHSEN
SANAA

A Yemeni man lowering his glance as a veiled woman walks by is not necessarily being polite. He may be trying to glimpse her heel and see if it is painted with naqsh to arouse his interest.

Naqsh — abstract paintings of flowers or plants on women's bodies — can be "sexually seductive," said Mariam, a university-graduate housewife who practices the centuries-old tradition.

Though covered in thick veils and long, black gowns, rich and middle-class women in this Moslem country are often aware of Western makeup and the latest fashions, but wear them only in private.

Naqsh is something that can be glimpsed publicly — though discreetly.

In other parts of the Arab world, the reddish-orange tones of henna is the most common body dye. It usually is used to paint a scattering of dots on the skin.

Naqsh is a black-colored vegetable dye, which like henna comes from a plant and, aficionados say, is more versatile than henna.

A naqsh design can start on the toes and continue in a dazzling,

zigzag way around the leg to the upper thigh. From the hand it may spread all the way to the breast.

Naqsh, done by women who practice the art as a profession, can be painted on any part of the body.

"A real artist of naqsh can make a woman into a moving portrait," said Zohra, a Yemeni woman who asked that her real name not be used.

Naqsh has its own rituals, explained Mariam, who also asked that her real name not be used.

Most girls are not allowed to have naqsh before marriage, she said.

"It is something for the husband. With its sexual insinuations,

girls are not encouraged to have it before marriage. They can watch, however," Mariam said.

One common way to have naqsh is to arrange an all-woman qat-chewing session to which relatives and friends are invited.

Qat, a bitter-tasting narcotic leaf which requires hours of chewing to produce its mild stimulant effect, is a common habit among men and women alike in Yemen.

As the women chew qat and smoke the hubble-bubble, women naqsh artists paint their bodies.

There are three main schools of naqsh in Yemen.

Weddings and other social gatherings are customary occasions to have naqsh. A woman sensing her husband's interest in her may be wanting also may have new naqsh every week or fortnight. (Reuters)

Influential Arab newspaper publishes defense of Talmud



AN influential Arab newspaper has published as a reader's letter a positive exposition on the Talmud, apparently a first in the Arab media anywhere.

The defense of the Talmud appeared recently in the daily *Al-Hayat*, following an earlier article in the same paper, described by the Simon Wiesenthal Center as "an inflammatory attack on a sacred Jewish text and Jewish values."

Al-Hayat is considered *The New York Times* of the Arab world, published in London and financed by Saudi Arabia, according to Rabbi Abraham Cooper of the Wiesenthal Center, which regularly monitors the Arab press.

The initial article was written by Dr. Abdul al-Whab al-Masiri, an Egyptian scholar and philosopher, who claimed that the Talmud taught Jews to kill the best of the Gentiles and that, with the coming of the Messiah, all people would

become slaves to Israel.

He also "revealed" that Jewish merchants can sell spoiled merchandise to Gentiles and that Jewish doctors are prohibited from treating Gentiles (or only in order to harm them).

In rebuttal, a point-by-point refutation of the article was sent by Rabbi Daniel Landes, the Wiesenthal Center's director of educational projects, as well as a pulpit rabbi and visiting professor of Jewish law at Loyola University.

In his letter, Landes also cited excerpts from the Koran advocating tolerance for other beliefs and stating that God will reward all who believe in Him and work righteousness, including "those who follow the Jewish scriptures."

To Landes's pleasant surprise, his refutation was published virtually in full in *Al-Hayat* as a letter to the editor, deleting only his references to the Koran.

DESPITE this small "victory," Cooper said that "verbal terrorism" against Jews and Israel continues in much of the Arab media.

He cited a recent article in *Al-Kods*, a Russian-Palestinian newspaper published in Moscow, which accuses the Jewish Agency of stealing Russian children as cannon fodder for the Israeli army, adding that 150,000 Pal-

estians have been burned in Israeli crematoria after undergoing chemical, biological and bacteriological experiments.

Under the headline, "Hidden Government Ruling the World," the Egyptian government newspaper *Rose el-Yousef* recently rang

some variations on the long-discredited *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

The article proclaimed that 20 of the richest people in the world meet annually in Holland to decide the course of the world's economy for the next year.

The same weekly and other Egyptian newspapers have also attacked the film *Schindler's List*, likening it to an "infectious influenza" and claiming it was designed to mobilize support for Israel.

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DAVID BAR-ILLAN

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The Syrian exodus

THERE was something paradoxical about the news of yesterday's arrival in Israel of Rabbi Abraham Hamra, spiritual leader of Syrian Jewry. That since 1992 Syrian Jews have been allowed to leave Syria has been touted as a goodwill gesture, a sign of Syria's willingness to make peace with Israel. But the whole exodus had to be kept secret lest Syrian dictator Hafez Assad renege on the agreement. Even now, the news of Hamra's arrival was kept secret until the very last minute. And right before his departure from the US, Hamra felt obligated to heap fulsome praise on Assad, out of concern for the Jews who are still in Damascus.

That granting such an elementary human right — the right to leave one's country — should be considered a "confidence-building measure" is a sad commentary on our time. But, like the Soviets, the Syrians held their Jewish citizens as hostages; and as in the case of the Soviets, it was the US, to its great credit, which made permission for Jews to emigrate a litmus test of Syria's intentions.

Indeed, there should be no mistake about it: it was only US intervention that made free emigration of Jews from Syria possible, for it is only the US that Assad wishes to placate, not Israel.

To make the meaning of his gesture clear, Assad conditioned the Jews' license to depart on their going to America or anywhere else, but specifically not to Israel. It was a condition he knew could not be enforced. But it was another bit of terror to which he could hold the Jews hostage.

That a third of the Jews who left Syria in the past two years moved from the US to Israel was a secret in which, astonishingly, even the foreign media collaborated. Despite the cleansing process the Syrian dictator has undergone in the West, the press has realized that revealing the immigration of some Syrian Jews to Israel might expose Syria's remaining Jews to danger.

If nothing else, the story of Syrian Jewry should remind the world what life has been like for Jews in Arab countries. Jews have lived in Syria since before Islam. Some of the synagogues now being abandoned are older than the land's famous mosques. Yet Jews have never enjoyed equality with the local population.

This does not mean that some have not prospered. The economic success of Jewish businessmen in Damascus and other cities sometimes reached legendary proportions. But their life, resembling that of Jews in medieval Europe, has never been free of fear.

Not surprisingly, even today there are those who would trade equality, liberty, and even a sense of individual and communal security, for fleshpots. The 300 Jews left in Damascus are materially doing well and prefer to stay there. Others, who have emigrated to the US and Israel, find integration pangs so excruciating they talk of their past life in Syria with nostalgia. But the fundamental fact is that the overwhelming majority of the Syrian Jewish community has spoken with its feet. It has left Syria for the free world.

Nor is this exodus a new phenomenon. The myth that the persecution and maltreatment of Jews in Syria began as a result of the Six Day War, in which Israel won Syrian land, is precisely that: a myth. Even before the establishment of the state of Israel, when the Jewish community there was 40,000 strong, the Jewish underground organizations in Palestine smuggled hundreds of Jews from Syria. After the state was established, thousands more escaped to Lebanon and found their way to Israel.

Escaping Syria was no easy assignment. Jews were arrested, tortured and killed by the Syrian authorities for the crime of trying to leave the country or helping others to do so. Traveling businessmen had to leave family members behind as hostages, to assure their own return. Relatives of those who managed to escape were incarcerated and tortured.

The most notorious case was that of four young Jewish women, three of them sisters, who were killed by the Syrian secret police when they tried to cross the Lebanese border in March 1974. Yet despite all these harrowing difficulties, most Jews left. By the time Assad granted them official permission to travel abroad, only 4,000 were left.

That all those who wanted to leave have finally been allowed to do so is a welcome development. But only a third of them have opted for Israel. That Hamra has chosen to "make aliya" is therefore particularly encouraging.

As an extraordinary spiritual leader of the Jewish community in Syria he played a pivotal role in bolstering Syrian Jews' morale and unity in their time of agony. If they follow him now the way they followed him then, the majority will choose to settle in Israel.

It can only be hoped that the government, which is responsible for their integration in this country, will match the achievement of the Jewish Agency, which has been largely responsible for organizing and financing their exit from Syria and their aliya from the US.

MEIR ROMENOFF



Too inflexible for Rabin

YORAM ARIDOR

CAN the government really be interested in overturning the rule of law and undermining the foundations of democracy? Before the Supreme Court handed down its decision on sending Israeli policemen to Haiti earlier this month, there was anger in the cabinet at the court's interference in government decisions.

There are jurists in the government who feel it is exempt from legal supervision when it comes to international affairs. This is outdated and wrong. The government is always subordinate to the law. And the courts are the rightful interpreter of what the law requires.

The prime minister, who has lately been sounding like a teacher of constitutional law, resents this. One might say he's trying to invent a "flexible" system of constitutional law.

Take the referendum on withdrawing from Golan. There, he's opposed to a special majority, because this would "hobble" the government.

But in a democracy, the government must always operate under certain restrictions. And there are decisions — especially on legal and international questions — which require a special majority. The US Senate, for example, needs a two-thirds majority to ratify an international convention.

The concept of a referendum isn't anchored in law, which allows for maneuvering as to the subject and wording of the referendum, and its timing.

But note that the premier isn't proposing any public referendum on his deals with Shas, since it is safe to assume that the public would reject Shas' demands that Halacha be given priority over the

law. With Shas, Rabin goes to a referendum in the Labor Party leadership bureau, where, predictably, he gets his majority.

RABIN SEES nothing wrong with a special majority when he feels he needs one for his own purposes.

He has demanded that in the Basic Law: The Government, which goes into effect in the next elections, the clause governing the Knesset's power to get a prime minister out of office by majority vote be amended.

The premier never actually said 'I am the law.' But that's how he acts

He feels a simple majority oughtn't to be enough to get rid of a prime minister; such a step needs a larger majority, like the one MK Avigdor Kahalani is demanding for a repeal of the Golan Law. Rabin rejects the idea of a larger majority on the Golan issue, but favors it for prime ministers.

The premier's constitutional struggle is aimed at weakening not only the Knesset, but the Supreme Court. The argument that the court is straying from the realm of the law into politics stems from ignorance, if not outright malice.

The court's function is to maintain compliance with the law, and if the government breaches the law, it is at fault and not the court. In the process of handing down judgment, the court also gives ex-

pression to the norms required in a democracy. That is how things are done in democratic countries.

But the government doesn't like this either. In his agreement with Shas, Rabin is ready to agree in advance to the alteration of laws, if their interpretation by the court fails to reflect the understanding between Labor and Shas of what constitutes the status quo.

Louis XIV said: "L'état, c'est moi [I am the state]." Rabin has chosen the slogan "I am the law." And that's just how he acts, with some inexplicable assistance from his minister of justice, changing the law according to which the Supreme Court disqualified two Y'ud MKs from joining the coalition, one as a minister, the other as a deputy minister. There, Rabin's formula was "a ministerial portfolio for every deserter [from another party]."

Three members of Rabin's cabinet are law professors. Israel has never had such a legally well-endowed government. And never have there been such attempts to undermine the Supreme Court. The minister of justice's verbal protests and voting against the agreement with Shas do not absolve him of responsibility in the matter. As long as those law professors remain members of the government, they bear joint responsibility for its behavior.

The main place to fight Rabin's campaign against democracy is, of course, the Knesset, where his support is shaky. The other arena is the Supreme Court itself. When Rabin strays from the law, the court will put him back on track.

The writer is a former Likud finance minister.

Not so tender trap

JOYCE GABRIEL

WHY is it that some men equate love with control? So many women I know have encountered at least one such man.

At first, he seems unbelievably nice, even goes out of his way to do the little extra things that show he is trying to take good care of you.

But then you notice that he calls all the time, that he wants to see more of you than you do of him.

Next, he wants to know where you've been when you haven't been with him. And, after that, if you're still around, he wants to critique where you've been, even what your character flaws are.

The control boys are self-centered and narcissistic. They may say they like strong, independent women — and perhaps a part of them does — but eventually it's that very strength and independence that they try to undermine through argument or innuendo.

Why do so many men equate love with control?

They'll accuse you of being shallow or selfish or cruel or cold. But mostly they mean you're not doing what they want you to do.

For these guys, love is a test, and you're only as good as the last exam you passed. They're always questioning your love, affection and loyalty. They suspect you are avoiding them or lying to them or, somehow, some way, withholding part of yourself from them.

And they can't allow that. They have to control you, own you. What surprises me is that so many women can still find themselves caught in such a trap, even if it's one that begins as a tender one.

On the other hand, many of these guys are sick in their manipulations in the early days of a relationship. Their need for total control isn't always apparent from the beginning. They learn to disguise it.

WHAT IS so ironic is that this kind of man defines love as its opposite.

Love is acceptance, liking, trust, honesty. But to men like this, love is control. It is judgmental, distrustful, manipulative and deceitful. Instead of a powerful force for good, love, in their hands, becomes a weapon of mass destruction.

Men who seek to love this way usually tear apart the relationship they are trying to strengthen or maintain. Tragically, they sometimes destroy the person they're trying to control — either physically or psychologically.

Even when they don't get that far, the women who are the object of these manipulative attentions realize, on some level, that they're engaged in a struggle for survival.

When women talk about these kinds of relationships, they often describe physical symptoms for how they have felt in them: strangled, choked, stifled, trapped, smothered. Horrifying words, filled with the terror of being pushed into a box someone has labeled "love."

I dated one guy like this years ago. It was a year that seemed like a decade, filled with accusations and endless discussions of his feelings and my failings.

By the time I walked away, all I could feel was relief. He is the only old boyfriend I never think of, fondly.

To be fair, he was devastated by the experience, because he thought his control frenzy was love, and because I wasn't the first person he had literally driven away through his obsessive behavior.

I hadn't thought about him for years, until a friend was telling me about her relationship — of a much shorter duration — with someone who started out as Mr. Understanding, but quickly turned into the Grand Inquisitor.

"Just walk away," I said to her. As she was telling me about this man, I felt a rush of the sense of being suffocated, just like I had had in that kind of relationship years before.

"No matter what he says, don't feel sorry for him. Just walk away," I said.

She did. (Stanford Advocate)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TV PROGRAMS

Sir, — This letter comes as a long-delayed protest. Why does Israel Television persist in removing *Northern Exposure* from the TV screen? It is at present the only intelligent series showing today, whether on the First or Second Channels.

After suffering deprivation for weeks, *Northern Exposure* has returned to the screen — at 11:35 at night! What *chutzpa* to put it on so late! Put the violence on then, or the cheap stupid comedies, or the endless and repetitive talk shows. And return *Northern Exposure* to a half-way decent hour.

At one time, there were good series being broadcast. To name just a few, which we remember nostalgically: *The Paper Chase*, *Fame*, *The O'Neil Line*, *The Forsythe Saga*, *All in the Family*. And Israelis really watched and enjoyed them.

We *Northern Exposure* fans may not be a huge audience, but we deserve a break from boredom, idiocy and violence.

HASSIA BEN-HARARI
Tel Aviv.

ISRAELI ARABS

Sir, — The contention that a 65 percent majority in the Golan referendum is racist, as expressed by Rabin and by Jon Simons in his article "Non-Jews in the Israeli 'club'" (October 7) should not be left without a rebuttal.

Israeli Arabs are not subject to military service. Why? Is it racism? No. The plain truth is the existence of a conflict between Jews and Arabs; the Arab citizens consider themselves part of the Arab nation and cannot be expected to fight against their Arab brothers. For the very same reason, Arab citizens of Israel cannot be expected to consider Israel's national interest in the referendum in question.

As far as they are concerned, they wouldn't mind if not only the Golan but also Galilee, Haifa, Jaffa etc. were placed under Arab rule.

This has nothing to do with depriving Israeli Arabs of all their rights of citizenship; it only disqualifies them as arbiters in the Jewish-Arab conflict. Unless one assumes that Israel's desire to exist is racism, one cannot qualify the special majority in the referendum as racism.

DR. JACOB ROSIN
Netanya.

CONVERSIONS IN ISRAEL

Sir, — I refer to the otherwise well done feature by Herb Keino, "The High Holy Daze," in the Rosh Hashana supplement. The statement that I supervise conversions for the Rabbinical Council of America in Israel is not quite correct. Only the *batei din* (rabbinical courts) associated with the Chief Rabbinate are authorized to convert.

The Rabbinical Council of America in Israel sponsors a program of instruction and preparation for a Torah way of life for individuals who have already opened a file at the *batei din* declaring their intention to convert.

They are recommended to our program by the executive secretary of the dayanim (rabbinical judges) and the coordinator of the rabbinical courts. I supervise the classes and curriculum, which are given in English and in Russian. Our screening process and evaluation of the candidates is highly regarded by the Jerusalem *Batei Din*.

RABBI JAMES I. GORDON,
Vice President,
Rabbinical Council of America
in Israel
Jerusalem.

A.C. JACOBS

Sir, — The Scottish poet and translator, A.C. Jacobs, died at the age of 56 last March. As publisher of his two main books, I am authorized by his family to solicit the cooperation of anybody who might have published or read articles, letters, poems or translations by him in journals. Photocopies would be gratefully received, and their cost reimbursed.

with Hearing Eye) hope to publish a *Collected Poems and Translations*, which will be the enduring legacy of one of Britain's finest Jewish poets and Hebrew translators.

A. RUDOLF,
The Menard Press,
8 The Oaks,
Woodside Avenue,
London N12 8AR

THE ABILITY TO COMPLAIN

Sir, — The husband of "The doctor who has no license" (October 7) does not dare give his name in the article for fear that his wife will probably need the same clerk again and cannot risk alienating her.

This anti-democratic outrage is in total contrast to what I do when I am dissatisfied with bureaucratic treatment in New York. I never hesitate to use my name, and if necessary, I go from one person to the next until I get satisfaction. If it means getting a bureaucrat fired, so be it. In fact, I have several such cases pending in New York even as I visit Israel now. Similarly, I do not hesitate to thank a clerk for a job well done.

It seems that virtually every vile practice or insane or idiotic fact that originates in America somehow makes its way to Israel. Is it too much to hope for that some beneficial practice, such as the ability to complain against incompetent or insensitive bureaucrats without fear of running up against ingrained *protektzia*, would possibly make its way here?

JOSEPH CEDER
Jerusalem (Far Rockaway, N.Y.)

REFERENDUM MAJORITY

Sir, — In his op-ed article of October 7, Jon Simons suggests that it is undemocratic and racist to insist on a 65 percent majority on the proposed Golan referendum, despite the fact that a two-thirds majority (i.e. 66.6 percent) is commonly required for major decisions in older democracies than ours. He maintains that this would, essentially, neutralize the 15 percent indigenous Israeli Arab vote.

I suggest, rather, that it is the learned professor's position which is itself racist, as implicit therein is, obviously, the assumption that essentially all Israeli Arabs would vote, en bloc, for ceding the Golan to Syria. This implies that, unlike other Israelis who can be expected to be split in some way on any potential issue, Israeli Arabs would, as a group, vote for what are, in fact, external Arab interests.

It becomes clear, therefore, that Simons is suggesting that Israeli Arabs are loyal, not to Israel, but to the "Arab cause" as they see it.

Not nice, Professor Simons.
JEANETTE N. DERSHOWITZ
Herzliya.

The truth, loud and clear

URI DROMI

ONE of the criticisms opponents have leveled against Prime Minister Rabin is that he keeps everyone in the dark and reveals nothing about his true intentions concerning the future of Israeli communities on the Golan Heights. This claim is totally unfounded.

Immediately after the government was formed, in the summer of 1992, at one of the first sessions of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee the premier stated: "We will not give up the Golan Heights — but this does not mean we must hold onto every centimeter of ground."

When Golan residents demanded that Rabin make a commitment that not a single one of their communities will be harmed as a result of the negotiations, he refused to be forced into delineating lines before Israel had reached a serious stage in the negotiations.

If this were the first time Israel is being required to pay for peace with territory, Rabin could fashion an original approach to settling the bargain. However, the precedent created by the withdrawal from Sinai has cast a heavy shadow over the negotiations with Syria.

"If it is possible to achieve peace without returning anything," he asked at a public meeting in September 1992, "how come the Likud didn't succeed in holding on to even 1 percent of the Sinai?"

At every opportunity, Rabin has criticized those who returned all of the Sinai but now demand that he make peace without dismantling any communities. He has consistently told those who espouse slogans like "Peace with the Golan" and its twin, "Peace in return for peace," to examine their own records.

IT IS interesting to compare Rabin's approach to the Golan communities and peace with Syria to that of two other leaders who, like him, were faced with the dilemma of choosing between territory and a historic opportunity to make peace: Menachem Begin and Charles de Gaulle.

Following Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in 1977, Menachem Begin — a man dedicated to the concept of a Greater Israel — was torn between his yearning for peace and his belief that under no circumstances should Israeli communities be uprooted.

In the end, the man who stated, on leaving for Camp David, that if the dismantling of Israeli commu-

nities was discussed there he would pack his bags and come home, understood that he had to return every inch of the Sinai for true peace with Egypt.

His last-minute attempt to make the removal of the Sinai communities conditional upon receiving the Knesset approval was short-lived, and the rest is history.

Since his election, Rabin has been open, direct and consistent about the Golan

Begin will go down in history not as someone who led his faithful followers astray, but as a great leader who achieved the first peace agreement between Israel and an Arab state, the largest of its neighbors.

Charles de Gaulle returned to power in 1958 under the banner of "French Algeria." However, within three years, he had carried out a move completely opposed to this policy. The French army and settlers left Algeria, which then became an independent country. When De Gaulle was asked how he had managed to sweep the French people along in such a move, he said:

"Were I to announce my intentions point-blank, there would be no doubt that the sea of ignorant fear, of shocked surprise, of concerted malevolence through which I was navigating would cause such a tidal wave of alarms and passions in every walk of life that the ship would capsize. I must, therefore, maneuver without even changing course until such time as, unmis-

takeably, common sense broke through the mists." (Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace, Algeria, 1954-1962*).

With this vivid allegory, De Gaulle attempted to cover up the fact that he had, more than once, lied to his people, and especially to his army ("The French army will never leave this land!" he declared to his cheering troops, during a visit to Algeria in 1959).

But again, De Gaulle will not be remembered for his inconsistency and fickleness, but rather as a leader who clearly identified his country's overriding interest, rescued it from distress, and launched it into a position of prosperity and preeminence in Europe.

Rabin is trying to lead the Israeli public toward peace with Syria in a different way.

Unlike Begin, who stunned his supporters with a bolt from the blue, an about-face from his previous position of "not one grain of sand," unlike De Gaulle, who led his supporters blindly by the nose, Rabin has told the public the bitter truth at every opportunity: peace agreement with Syria that ensures Israel's security will require a withdrawal on the Golan Heights.

As a further token of the difference in his approach, he volunteered to hold a referendum before a peace agreement is signed. If a peace agreement with Syria is achieved and the Israeli people are required to make their voice heard, there will doubtless be a split between the agreement's supporters and their opponents.

But on one fact it will be impossible to disagree. From the very beginning, in the press, on radio and TV, the prime minister's message has been open, direct and consistent.

The writer is director of the Israel Government Press Office.

POSTSCRIPT

AN INTERNATIONAL soccer match took a turn for the bizarre recently, because of a poorly conceived rule.

Barbados was playing Grenada in the final group match of the Shell Caribbean Cup, needing to win by two goals to qualify for the finals. Barbados was leading 2-0 with about 20 minutes to go when they accidentally plucked the ball in their own net, making the score 2-1.

That was when the farcical rule came into play. To ensure a result,

it had been decided that a game won in overtime would be deemed the equivalent of a 2-0 victory — which was exactly what Barbados needed.

With three minutes to go in the 2-1 game, the Barbadians suddenly stopped advancing on the enemy goaltender and attacked their own net, scoring on themselves to tie the score at 2-2.

The Grenada players, momentarily stunned, realized what was happening — and proceeded to blitz their own goaltender. But they couldn't score on themselves

because the Barbados players were ... defending the Grenada goal!

The Barbados tactic worked: the score remained tied after regulation time, and they scored four minutes into overtime.

After the game, Grenada coach James Clarkson said: "The game should never be played with so many players on the field confused. Our players didn't even know which direction to attack, our goal or theirs."

Jonathan Schonfeld.

Harold Bloom's list of must reads

In his recently-published book 'The Western Canon,' critic Harold Bloom does his best to defend traditional literary values, Kenton Robinson writes

"COME in, my dear," says the sad-eyed man who greets you at the door. He is not a tall man, but he is imposing, thick in body and heavy-faced. And yet his step is light as he leads you — "This way, dear" — past the shadowy book-lined walls of his living room into a dining room where the sun spills across the table.

"Sit anywhere, dear," he says, and he sighs as he lowers himself into a chair. He is a soft-spoken man in a huge blue sweater with his shirt collar sticking out, his white hair a scrambled shock. His face seems set in a permanent frown, and he punctuates his sentences with sighs.

So this is the hated Harold Bloom, the Great Satan according to the politically correct, bane of Marxists, feminists, Afrocentrists and multiculturalists, and fatal foe to those who would politicize the study of literature.

This is the author of *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages*, a 578-page tome, published this month, that savages all of the above and argues that they are "destroying all intellectual and aesthetic standards in the humanities and social sciences, in the name of social justice."

This is the critic Bloom, who would return us to the classics, to Shakespeare, to Dante, to Chaucer, who believes in "the autonomy of the aesthetic," who tells us that great literature transcends the sex, race and creed of its author, and is not about our differences but what we have in common and what we would transcend: death.

"Traditions tell us that the free and solitary self writes in order to overcome mortality," he writes. "I think that the self, in its quest to be free and solitary, ultimately reads with one aim only: to confront greatness.... Our common fate is age, sickness, death, oblivion. Our common hope, tenuous but persistent, is for

some version of survival."

Harold Bloom does not want this story to be about him.

He wants it to be about his book. But as Bloom writes of the *Essays* of Montaigne, "the book is the man is the book," so is *The Western Canon* a sort of summing up of Bloom.

BORN IN the Bronx in 1930, the son of Russian immigrants, he began reading hungrily when he was still just a boy — William Blake, John Milton, William Shakespeare — and he has never stopped.

"I've basically spent the bulk of my life reading and rereading books that mattered," he says. "And though it is not all of life, it is as good, at least as good, as anything else in life, and it clearly is a source of value and makes a difference."

At 64, he is in his 40th year at Yale University, and is the author of 21 books, many of them controversial, including *The Book of J*, which scandalized the religious establishment by arguing that the biblical books Genesis, Exodus and Numbers were written by a woman.

THE WESTERN Canon reflects a lifetime spent reading and thinking about books. In it, he writes about 26 writers central to the Western literary tradition, explaining what it is that makes them members of "the canon" and their books essential to our understanding of ourselves.

They range widely, from William Shakespeare to Samuel Beckett, from Miguel de Cervantes to Jorge Luis Borges, and from Jane Austen to Virginia Woolf. In the back of his book, he lists scores of writers who also occupy the canon.

"Some books are actually better than other books," he says simply, "and for reasons other than immediate political and social and



Bloom: I've basically spent most of my life reading and rereading books that mattered. (Mary Price)

class or ethnic matters." This is what he means when he refers to "the autonomy of the aesthetic" judgment.

"That judgment is the judgment of the individual who has read a great deal and thought a great deal about what she or he is reading, of the really educated individual who knows how to read, and who reads deeply and passionately and cares about what she or he is reading, and cares in the end more about reading itself and what is being read than various causes and ideologies."

But isn't this subjective? "My dear, my dear, let me say that one of the biggest and silliest myths I know of is the idea that objectivity in aesthetic or indeed in most matters is somehow in itself a great virtue. What most people mean by what they call objectivity is something easy, cheap, vulgar and disgusting."

"Deep subjectivity, real subjectivity, having a subjectivity of one's own, is not an easy thing at all. It's something that you earn through a life of reading and reflection and pondering the experience both of human beings and of books, and of going very deep into your own self."

AS A critic, he has many critics.

They call him sexist, racist, Eurocentric.

He calls them "the School of Resentment," "a rabblement of lemmings" and victims of "the current disease of moral smugness."

"Either they are teaching popular culture, which is neither popular nor culture, but which is junk, dreck, garbage... — you know, they're teaching theme parks, they're teaching television, they're teaching Batman comics — or they are teaching multicultural bad writing."

And multiculturalism, he says, is the literature of hate.

"They want authors who are resentful; they want authors who are good haters. Forgive me. That's why I call it the School of Resentment."

"If multiculturalism meant Cervantes, then who could possibly object? But it doesn't mean Cervantes. But that is not what they mean. They mean the lowest common denominator. They mean garbage."

And no author is more multicultural, Bloom argues, than he who is at the canon's center and whose works are performed in translation all over the world: Shakespeare.

"Students and friends have de-

scribed for me Shakespeare as they have seen him in Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Indonesian and Italian," he writes. "And the general report has been that the audiences were as one in finding that Shakespeare represented them upon the stage."

In the end, this is what Bloom and his book are about. It is not about morality, right or left. "The book is about whether the study of literature is to survive among us."

And about that he is pessimistic.

"What I increasingly feel is that the literary work which best covers the whole situation is Alexander Pope's greatest poem, 'The Dunciad,' especially its apocalyptic fourth part, with the triumph of the Goddess Dullness."

What hope, then, does he have for his book?

"It will be my justification, my accomplishment in life, if a few thousand people will pick up the book and will actually go and read Milton and Shakespeare and Wordsworth and Tolstoy and Montaigne, who otherwise wouldn't have done it. That would justify the book, and I would have done something."

Bloom sighs.

"Then I would have done something." (The Hartford Courant)

A 'witness' with a painful message

Criticized for exploiting the Holocaust, Elie Wiesel wrote no more about it until now, in his memoirs, John Follain writes



Wiesel: "We are the witnesses, and if we cannot speak, who will?" (David Rubinger)

DECADES ago, Elie Wiesel stopped writing about the Holocaust after critics accused him of exploiting its horrors to become rich and famous.

Now, the Nobel Peace Prize winner has bared his soul once again to relive his searing memories of the death camps at Auschwitz and Buchenwald.

"In the 1960s I stopped writing about the camps because I could not take the criticism. People said: 'How much longer will you wallow in suffering?' I regret it now because, if I stop and others stop, what will happen?"

"We are the witnesses and if we cannot speak, who will?" Wiesel said in an interview on the publication of his memoirs *Tous les Fleuves Vont à la Mer* ("All Rivers Flow to the Sea").

Wiesel, 66, describes himself first as a "witness," above his other roles as author of some 40 books, philosopher, journalist, playwright and professor of humanities at Boston College.

He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986 as "a messenger to mankind" for helping overcome apathy and doubt and forcing the world to remember the Holocaust.

UNLIKE HIS first testimony, *Night*, a harrowing account of life in the camps published in 1960, the memoirs describe his boyhood in the small town of Sighet in Romania, where religious studies pushed him into mystical attempts to summon the Messiah.

In an account that stops at his wedding in 1969, he relates his first clumsy flirtations with the opposite sex, his early career as a penniless journalist and his friendship with French writer François Mauriac and former prime minister Golda Meir.

The aftermath of World War II, what he calls "adjusting to life after death," is overshadowed by the few pages dedicated to the Nazi camps where he lost his mother, father and sister.

As his father lies dying, 16-year-old Wiesel crouches nearby powerless to answer his desperate calls because camp guards have forced them apart. The last words of his father — his own name called out again and again — have haunted him ever since.

"My father is agonizing and it hurts so much I am bursting. I don't want to leave him, they force me to. They beat me, they are about to knock me senseless. ... My father is dead and I am no longer in pain. I no longer feel anything: someone has died within me, and it is me."

A PRIVATE man, Wiesel had

written only once about himself, in *Night*. In the memoirs, he tells more about his relationship with his father and touches for the first time on his strong bond with his younger sister, who also died in the camps.

"I want to reveal what is necessary for the understanding of my other books. Whatever I've said is true, but I haven't said everything that's true," he said.

The memoirs draw on hundreds of notes and scribbles in Yiddish, Hebrew and French which Wiesel has accumulated since he left Buchenwald in 1945. The first was a brief diary entry in Yiddish when he crossed the border: "I just arrived in France."

It took years before he committed to paper the hell that was in his mind. "I didn't write about the concentration camp until 1954 when I started *Night*. I remembered everything. The memory was vivid because I hadn't written about it, it became more and more vivid until it burst out in 1954," he said.

Although the book was hailed worldwide, some Jewish leaders criticized Wiesel privately for linking their cause to the Holocaust.

The criticism prompted him to stop writing about the camps and it was many years before he again began to tackle the subject — only in speeches and indirectly — with pleas on behalf of the survivors or Soviet Jews.

"These memoirs are the first time I confront the Holocaust again head on. Whenever journalists asked me something, it was about the camps, the camps, the camps," Wiesel said.

"The journalists forgot I have done something since then. And here there is humor, you need to laugh, you need to sing, to try to be happy and to share joy. It's not simply a morbid exploration of sadness."

But the death of his father, Wiesel explains in the book, means that he can never be blissfully happy. He writes that he cried on his wedding day, thinking of the man who should have been at his side.

Neither his father, nor the rest of his family, nor anybody else in the small community had any idea where the cattle train which left Sighet in May 1944 was taking them.

"We didn't know. We got to Auschwitz, a few days before D-Day, and we saw the name of the place at the station and we did not know where we were."

"We did not understand. Why had nobody warned us?" (Reuters)

A French embarrassment even after 100 years

Some historians believe the Dreyfus affair was a triumph for French justice, but it remains a painful landmark for the country, Marilyn August reports

A century has passed since Alfred Dreyfus, the Jewish captain in France's army, was falsely accused of spying. Yet the events that shook the nation to its democratic roots remain a painful landmark many French would rather overlook.

This year has seen some 1,000 books, articles and conferences on the period, but official ceremonies commemorating the beginning of Dreyfus's 12-year ordeal are scant.

Officials unveiled a bronze plaque Friday on the Paris apartment house where Dreyfus lived with his family from 1927 until his death in 1935. A statue of Dreyfus commissioned by President François Mitterrand will be rededicated Sunday by Paris Mayor Jacques Chirac.

After eight years of wrangling, the statue was finally transferred from a temporary spot in the Tuileries gardens to a permanent home on the Left Bank.

The Dreyfus affair seems still to embarrass the institution that framed him as a spy for Germany, then covered up evidence clearing him.

Today, neither the *Defense Ministry* nor the *Ecole Polytechnique*, the elite military school from which Dreyfus graduated, wants the Dreyfus statue on its premises.

"Yet historians agree the Dreyfus Affair had much laudable fallout, including the separation of church and state in 1905."

"The Dreyfus Affair was an extremely positive triumph for

French justice," says Michael Burns, a history professor at Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts and the author of *Dreyfus: A Family Affair*.

"Dreyfus was acquitted and released. The system finally worked," says Burns. "The French republic survived."

Dreyfus, a Jew born into a wealthy manufacturing family in Alsace — then occupied by France's archenemy Germany — was a well-respected army officer and happy father of two when his world collapsed on October 15, 1894.

"Dreyfus had four strikes against him: he was rich, aloof, Alsatian and Jewish," wrote the newspaper *Le Monde*.

Dreyfus suspected nothing when ordered to report to the military high command in civilian dress. He was placed under arrest.

Those first days in near-total isolation were marked by sleeplessness and fainting spells resulting from brutal interrogations by his sadistic inquisitor, Commander Du Puy de Clam.

Only Dreyfus's undying faith in French justice, his loyalty to the army and determination to defend his honor kept him from suicide.

"Dear France, you, whom I love with all my heart and soul, ... how could you accuse me of such a terrible crime?" he wrote to his wife Lucie.

The antisemitic press whipped France into anti-Dreyfus hysteria and turned the nation against itself. Thugs smashed Jewish storefronts shouting "Death to the Jews."

Neither Dreyfus nor his lawyer had access to the file against him that contained the smoking gun: a torn sheet of yellow paper plucked from a wastebasket in the German Embassy listing the latest French artillery. The handwriting faintly resembled that of Dreyfus.

Two months later, Dreyfus was convicted of treason, stripped of his rank and exiled to Devil's Island, where he survived four years of sickness.

In 1896, George Picquart, an antisemitic colonel, uncovered new evidence pointing to Maj. Ferdinand Esterhazy as the real author of the suspicious note.

Picquart was muzzled, posted abroad and survived an assassination attempt. Outraged, he went on to become one of Dreyfus's most ardent supporters.

Esterhazy finally stood trial in

1898, but was acquitted after a three-minute deliberation.

Two days after the acquittal, Emile Zola penned *J'Accuse* ("I Accuse"), a 30-page open letter accusing the military of manipulating the courts.

Zola was jailed for libel, then

forced to flee to Britain, but he galvanized public opinion in Dreyfus's favor.

Dreyfus returned to France for a second trial in 1906. Again, the military refused to admit error, finding him guilty with "extenuating circumstances." A few days later, French president Emile Loubet issued a pardon.

A century after the accusations surfaced, some still question Dreyfus's innocence. Earlier this year, an army historian was fired for writing an article suggesting Dreyfus was guilty.

(Associated Press)

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(Associated Press)

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Door Knock Campaign
October 1994

Our sincere thanks to all the contributors, and to the volunteers, students, organizations, and companies that gave their support to the 1994 "Door Knock Campaign". We express our deep appreciation for your kind cooperation and efforts on behalf of this important cause. If you have not yet contributed, you are invited to send your donation to the Israel Cancer Association, P.O. Box 437, Givatayim 55104. Alternatively, between October 19-21, you can take one of our envelopes from a branch of Shekum or the Northern Co-op chain, or call our donations headquarters, 177-022-1312, or make a deposit in one of our accounts: Account No. 70100/99 at the Hahashmonaim branch, Tel Aviv; Bank Leumi LeYisrael; Account No. 681709 at the Tel Aviv central branch of the Israel Discount Bank; Account No. 51323 at the Tel Aviv central branch of Bank Hapoalim; Account No. 409-147648 at the Tel Aviv central branch of the First International Bank; Account No. 243248 at the Tel Aviv central branch of the United Mizrahi Bank; Account No. 6445-58 at the Tel Aviv central branch of Bank Otzar Lahav; Account 20243/54 at the Tel Aviv central branch of Bank Leumi; Account No. 5-30192-2 at the Postal Bank, Jerusalem. Also, between October 19-21, you can donate at the cashier counter at Super-Sol, Hyper Col, and Hyper Hagal Hayarok. During October, a contribution made on a "Visa" credit card account will give the card owner double the usual number of points. Questions and requests for Public Education material should be directed to Teleneida, 03-5717888.

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1994

Fogel brings up specter of devaluation

FINANCE Ministry director general Aharon Fogel yesterday warned that the economic conditions for growth will be compromised if the current discrepancy between the exchange rate and interest rates and wage levels continues.

Fogel, who addressed a seminar at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, is the first Treasury official to openly admit the shekel's value is out of sync with inflation since a flurry of economists have called for the currency's devaluation.

Although he did not mention devaluation, it was clear that should the government's efforts to lower labor costs to the private sector by means of tax cuts fail to reduce inflation, a devaluation will be imminent.

Fogel said until now the economic situation has been good, pointing for example to the dramatic four percent drop in unemployment in the past two years.

However, when looking ahead one sees problems, he said.

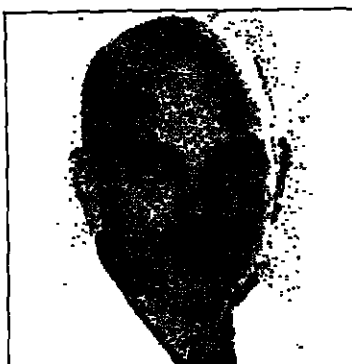
"The macro-economic conditions which are keeping interest and wage levels higher than the exchange rate are problematic," Fogel said. "If the situation continues like this, we will have a problem."

He attacked the public sector wage agreements, which make everyone pay higher wages and siphon away money that could be invested in making the economy more productive.

To defuse the inflationary impact of the wage agreement, Fogel said he hoped the workers would accept the Treasury's proposal to reduce the next cost-of-living wage adjustment by 3%, while cutting the health tax 1.5% and the National Insurance Institute employee taxes 0.5%.

By this means, labor costs could be contained, while the workers' purchasing power would be preserved.

JOSE ROSENFELD



Fogel: Macro-economic conditions keeping interest and wage levels higher than the exchange rate are problematic. (Boris Smaranko/Scoop 80)

trade deficit, saying it was part of the process of economic growth which depends on the importation of investment goods.

He also said he saw nothing wrong with this year's significant jump in private consumption, since it mostly derives from the improvement in the standard of living of low-income employees and new immigrants.

However, he admitted that consumption levels need to stabilize.

Fogel also attributed the drop in savings as a reaction to the prospect of peace, which has lowered individuals' tension and loosened their pockets.

Fogel called for an open trade relationship with Jordan and for eschewing a protectionist stand.

"Jordan is not only Jordan, but a bridge to other Arab countries," Fogel said. "If we put up trade barriers, we could lose market access to the other Arab countries."

Renaissance Fund buys Paz shares for \$100m.

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

including those investing in Israel for the first time.

The foreign investor group was led by Claridge Israel, which directly invested in the transaction through the Renaissance Fund. The group also includes New York investment bank Goldman Sachs, the Tisch family, owners of the CBS television network, BEA investment fund, and other foreign investors in Israel represented by the Dovrat Shuren firm.

As is known, Charles Bronfman, one of the owners of Claridge Israel, is also one of the owners of Seagrams and the international chemical giant DuPont, which holds 100% of the shares of CONOCO, the sixth-largest oil exploration company in the world.

CONOCO is one of the leading companies exploring for oil in Saudi Arabia and has a long-term contract there and in other Gulf states.

Paz chairman of the board Zaidik Bino and director general Abraham Bigger expressed satisfaction with the investors' decision to join the company.

"This is a strategic partnership for the long term that is likely to change, in a drastic fashion, the energy industry in Israel, transforming Paz into a serious player in the Middle Eastern market," said Bino.

Claridge Israel president Jonathan Kolbert noted that the acquisition's final announcement followed secondary Arab boycott by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states.

The Paz board of directors have appointed to the board Harvey Krueger, the founder and American manager of the Renaissance Fund. Kolbert and Danny Biran, vice president for investments at Claridge Israel, were also appointed to the board.

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Tadiran to raise some \$100m. in global offering next month

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

TADIRAN plans to raise between \$80 million and \$100m. through a global offering scheduled for the end of November, the company announced yesterday.

Tadiran chairman of the board Benny Gaon and managing director Yisrael Zamir have spent the last few days in New York planning the issue with representatives of major brokerage houses and investment banks on Wall Street.

The offering is part of Tadiran's plans to increase its involvement in the US and other world markets. The company, a subsidiary of Koor Industries, said the peace process is encouraging investors to invest in Israeli companies.

Zamir said the company plans to issue 3.9 million additional shares, representing about one-fifth of the company's share capital. Koor currently controls about 61 percent of Tadiran, but after the issue its share will be diluted to 52%.

Tadiran's shares will be registered in New York and issued to the public through an international prospectus published in Wall Street and registered on the New York Stock Exchange's Big Board.

The company decided to offer the shares worldwide through US and European underwriters. Merrill Lynch, the largest brokerage firm in the world, was chosen to manage the consortium of underwriters.

The brokerage firm headed the consortium of underwriters for Tadiran's initial US public offering in August 1992. The consortium of underwriters will also include Lehman Brothers and Oppenheimer.

Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS), one of the largest investment banks in the world, will manage the European consortium. Tadiran said this will be the first time UBS underwrites an international offering for an Israeli company.

Tadiran's shares will be registered on one of the leading European stock exchanges, most likely in London.

At the end of last week, investment bank BZW - a member of the British Barclays Group - was chosen as a leading underwriter for the European issue.

In addition to the global offering, Tadiran is continuing with its plans to register shares on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange. The company has not yet decided on the size of the issue, its structure, or timing.

Tadiran deputy finance manager Moshe Hurvitz said the company will issue its shares here in accordance with market conditions. A public issue on the TASE will allow the company to issue its shares to local residents and workers.

Shohat said the loophole is unreasonable, since the profits from the sale of the same company to private hands is fully taxable.

In addition, the exemption extends retroactively to capital gains the shareholder accumulated years before the industrial firm issued stock on the TASE.

Another distortion the law creates is that a company which raises capital by means of a loan does not buy any tax advantage for stockholders, while

a stock issue provides them with a full tax exemption.

Since only industrial firms are entitled to the tax loophole, industrial companies have turned into holding companies for non-industrial firms in the past few years, thereby shielding the profits from the issue of the non-industrial firm from taxes.

According to Shohat, this shows that the provision, rather than encouraging industrial development, has primarily turned into a tool to avoid paying taxes.

The Manufacturers Association opposes the elimination of the loophole, which it says will hurt the ability of industrial companies to raise funds on the TASE.

This is the Treasury's third attempt at closing this loophole.

In 1990, the proposal to do away with the tax exemption was included in the economic arrangements bill, and last year the proposal was included in the mergers and demergers legislation.

UPDATED PURCHASE TAX BRACKETS FOR DWELLINGS AND AGRICULTURAL LAND

July 16 - October 15	%	October 16 - January 15	%
Dwellings			
Up to NIS 173,180	0.5	Up to NIS 182,715	0.5
NIS 173,181 - NIS 429,150	3.5	NIS 182,716 - NIS 452,790	3.5
Over NIS 429,150	4.5	Over NIS 452,790	4.5
Agricultural lands			
Up to NIS 132,480	0.5	Up to NIS 139,780	0.5
Over NIS 132,480	5.0	Over NIS 139,780	5.0

The new purchase tax brackets effective October 16, 1994, were adjusted 5.51% to reflect the price increase of dwellings.

Shohat seeks support from panel members to eliminate tax loophole

JOSE ROSENFELD

FINANCE Minister Avraham Shohat yesterday asked Knesset Finance Committee members to support his proposal for eliminating a tax loophole which exempts industrial concerns from paying tax on their capital gains by means of a public issue.

Currently, a provision of the Industrial Encouragement Law exempts shareholders in industrial concerns from paying taxes on capital gains from the issue of stock on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange as long as they hold onto the shares for five years.

Shohat said the loophole is unreasonable, since the profits from the sale of the same company to private hands is fully taxable.

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Proposed stock market tax appears assured of committee approval

EVELYN GORDON

THE proposed stock market tax seems assured of passage through the Knesset Finance Committee, with the coalition and even some opposition MKs supporting it in general.

However, many of the MKs proposed modifications during the committee's first discussion of it yesterday.

According to Finance Minister Avraham Shohat, the tax corrects a historic injustice - the fact that workers pay taxes but speculators do not. Furthermore, he said, all proceeds from the new tax will go into other tax cuts.

The bill would create, as its default option, a 10 percent tax on all profits without the possibility of offsetting losses. Those who want to, however, could file tax returns, offset their losses, and pay a 20% tax.

For the first two years, investors will only have to decide at the end

of the year whether or not to file. After that, they will have to decide at the beginning of each year.

The bill also includes a 15% tax on profits from the sale of shares in mutual funds. Profits on existing bonds will be tax-free, but new bond issues will be taxed at the same rate as stocks.

Elie Goldschmidt (Labor) objected that some way should be found to permit offsetting losses without filing returns, as small investors are likely to be put off by this. Since most small investors use only one bank, the bank could calculate their profits and losses at the end of the year, and deduct the appropriate tax, he said.

Gideon Saguy (Labor) said investors should be allowed to choose whether or not to offset at the end of every year, so they can choose the most profitable path. Otherwise, investors might wind up paying taxes on losses, which would be unfair.

Ya'acov Shamai (Likud) said investments should not be taxed if they are less than a certain sum, to encourage small investors.

However, Shohat said this idea was unworkable, since there is no way to know how much a given person is investing, if he uses more than one bank.

Silvan Shalom and Ariel Weinstein (Likud) were two of the few who objected to the tax entirely, saying it would discourage economic growth by making it harder

for companies to raise money on the bourse, and would also spur inflation by encouraging people to spend rather than invest.

It is also unlikely that the tax will raise the NIS 500 million the Treasury expects, they said. Shalom pointed out that this estimate is based on the average of house profits for the past five years, which were peak years for profitability.

Weinstein added that what it gains through the tax, the government will lose in lower prices for the sale of government companies.

The two also said it was hard to justify giving a tax exemption to provident funds and advanced-study funds (*krantot hishtalmot*), but not to direct investment or mutual funds.

However, Shohat and committee chairman Gedalya Gal (Labor) dismissed most of these fears.

"We're talking about paying a tax of 10% on profits," he said. "This is marginal and negligible."

When pressed about the fact that the effective tax rate will usually be much higher than 10%, he retorted that "if it's 15%, that isn't marginal?"

Shohat added that the tax will no more discourage investing than the value-added tax discourages consumption.

Shohat also rejected the possibility that the tax might violate a property-protection clause in the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Freedom. The attorney-general has studied the issue, and concluded this is not a problem, he said.

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Amoco, Shell to provide know-how for Volta

RACHEL NEIMAN

AMOCO and Shell will provide know-how to manufacturer Volta Plastic Pipes, the company announced yesterday.

The firm will receive specialized information on PVC and plastic, which are oil by-products.

The deal was initiated by Volta, which proposed the joint ventures to the multinationals through their European offices. Financial details of the agreement were not disclosed.

Volta is currently involved in a \$1.8 million project to stabilize road infrastructure.

Company vice-president Yitzhak Kulik said Volta is developing a range of products designed to reinforce and strengthen roads and road shoulders.

Other products provide drainage, both horizontal and vertical.

Amoco know-how has assisted in the development of woven geotextile material. Kulik said use of wire mesh underlaid by geotextiles is used to combat soil erosion.

"We have a matrix of geotextiles with a range of applications," he said. "Each type of soil demands a different mix of fibers."

Volta has already begun marketing PVC products for ground stabilization and roadside drainage, developed with Shell.

"We intend to manufacture these products for export to the entire Middle East," Kulik said. "We have already received approval from Shell."

Volta will establish its own sales marketing and sales network to the Arab world.

In addition to products developed in conjunction with Shell and Amoco, Volta has its own range of products, already used in stabilization works here. Kulik said the company is currently negotiating a joint venture with a large US-based multinational in a related field.

Amoco, the world's fourth largest oil corporation, recently announced it would be expanding activity to the Israeli market.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Fruit growers launch campaign to limit imports: Fruit growers and northern agricultural committee representatives yesterday started a public campaign to persuade the government to decide on the volume of fruit imports only after the end of the picking seasons.

The fruit growers plan to send a letter of protest to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, because they fear the Agriculture Ministry's policy of apple and fruit imports hinders their incomes. The growers said the current volume of apples and pears on the market is equal to the volume of fruit during the same period last year. The growers urged the government not to allow additional imports until all cold storage stock is sold.

Trade deficit jumps 28.7%: The trade deficit, excluding diamonds, jumped 28.7 percent, or \$1.4 billion, during the first nine months of the year to \$6.21 billion, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported yesterday. Most of the increase was due to a \$1b. rise in the deficit with the European Union.

The deficit with the US rose a more moderate \$270 million, while the surplus with the former Warsaw Pact nations eroded to \$100m. from \$165m. during the same period last year. Imports grew \$1.7b., while exports only increased \$400m.

Ball officials arrive from US to negotiate deals with Phoenixia: A delegation of senior representatives of the US-based Ball have arrived here to negotiate joint cooperation agreements with Phoenixia, a fully-owned subsidiary of Koor Industries.

Phoenixia is the sole glass manufacturer in Israel. The company is mainly engaged in the manufacture of bottles and jars for the food industry. Ball is the third largest packaging manufacturer in the world. The company sells approximately \$2.4 billion worth of glass packaging products annually.

Manufacturers urge joint projects with Jordan: The Manufacturers Association yesterday called on the government to encourage joint cooperation agreements with Jordan. Manufacturers Association President Dan Propper said both countries have advantages which complement each other.

Such advantages include agricultural development, use of natural resources from the Dead Sea, development of chemical products, cooperation in the food and plastic fields, exploitation of water resources, and desalination

ANDRE LUMBROSO



Shekem declined 1% the day after it was announced that a co-

Turnover remained low at market value on the market
NIS 146 million. (\$154m.).

Most of the investors were disappointed by the meager results of

when Israel signs a peace agreement with one of its Arab neighbors."

news of the initialing of the peace agreement. There was not much activity among the blue chips.

Declines outnumbered rises by 0.2%, and Dead Sea Works n

W. C. Baker, General
11-1-1960

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

The FTSE 100 Index closed 34.9

Trading was directionless as post-election rally founders on-
ging talk about the health of
na's paramount leader D

The DAX closed at 2,084.76, down 6.12. In post-bourse trading The Hang Seng Index finished off 37.37 points at 9,418.57.

in the dollar and bonds, and poor sentiment.

kept to the sidelines because of the weak dollar.

Uncertainty over currency direction restricted trading in blue

WALL STREET REPORT

WALL STREET REPORT

The Dow Jones industrial aver-

867 on moderate volume of more than 259 million shares on the New recovery.

148 points since it began its uptick on October 7.

lower close for the Dow in the past eight sessions.

the dollar was quoted at 15025 0.97 to 764.81.

STEHLING	ZAESSEN	10/100/74	210/10/72	...
YEN	1.5374/87	0.6340/48	1.2758/75	5.27

Two-sided trading

THE PEOPLE YOU CAN TALK TO

[illegible]

Elco	61.625	-0.5	Logan & Pitt	35.75	-0.75	Pac Compress	22.575	+0
Ind Corp	23.625	-0.375	Leucadia Natl	38.875	+0.75	Pac Gas & Electr	22.575	+0
	29.000	-0.125	Lib Gen	59.875	+0.25	Pac Teleph	30.25	-0.375

CSL Inc.	22.5	+0.37%	GATX Corp.	41.5	+0	Maple Inc.	4.375	-0.12%	Rank Group ADR	13.375	+0.25	USAR-A Corp.	15.5	-0.12%	Salmora	463
CSX Inc.	308	+2	Glaxo Corp.	50.825	+0.16%	Nuclear Energy	4.375	-0.12%	Rancho Corp.	30.75	-0.25	US Home	15.5	-0.12%	Volkswagen	463
CDS Inc.	308	+2	GTE Corp.	40.5	-0.25	May Dept. St.	30.25	-0.12%	Raychem	82.575	-0.62%	US Life	32.125	-0.12%		
						Maytag Corp.	16.25	-0.12%	Reynolds	38.575	+0.25	US Shoe	30.5	+0		

48.5	+0.25	Meyers Corp.	13.00	+0.125	Reebok Int'l	38.375	+0.25	
Dpl	35.125	+0.125	McDermott	25	+0	Raychem Raym A	25.875	+0
1.175	-0.25	McDonalds	27.625	-0.125		87.125	-1.375	

Prices from 22:00 local

10-11-50



Deputy Defense Minister Mordechai Gur (center) yesterday views security renovations at the Machpela Cave in Hebron. (IDF Spokesman)

Settlers scorn new security measures at Machpela Cave

KIRYAT Arba and Hebron settlement leaders warned OC Judea and Samaria Maj.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz yesterday the government is inviting another tragedy in the Machpela Cave. This would occur, they said, if Jews walk away from new security arrangements in the cave with the feeling their religious rights are being trampled on.

Hebron Jewish community spokesman Noam Arnon said the new security arrangements Mofaz spelled out to the leaders are unacceptable. These include a stipulation that the larger Yitzhak Hall will be exclusively for Arab use except for 10 days a year.

"This is the first time the IDF has come to talk about the arrangements with us," Arnon said. "We said that if there is not a supreme effort to change this in-

fringement on religious rights, there will be an explosion."

In response to warnings that the new security arrangements at the cave may not prevent another tragedy, PLO Jerusalem Minister Faisal Hussein told Army Radio, "Unfortunately when people still speak in this fashion, it heats things up."

Some 15 settlement leaders went with Mofaz through the cave, the first time such a large group of settlers has been allowed there since the massacre in February.

Arnon said making the larger Yitzhak Hall off limits to Jews is unacceptable for a number of reasons. "The other halls do not hold enough people on Shabbat, there simply is not enough room to

HERB KEINON

pray," he said. "And we can not live with a situation where we will permanently be separated from one of our forefathers [Isaac] buried there."

Among the security devices set up in the cave are metal doors separating the Yitzhak Hall from the other halls, and metal detectors at the entrance to the cave that sound if anyone tries to walk in with a gun.

Mofaz's visit was followed by a visit by Deputy Defense Minister Mordechai Gur, who said the cave would be opened "very soon," but would not give a specific date.

According to those at the meeting with Mofaz, he said the IDF's target date for opening the cave is October 31, but that no final decision by the political echelon has yet been made.

After touring the cave, Gur went to Tel Rumeida and Beit Hadassah, and met with a number of settlers at Beit Betar. Many of the settlers complained of alleged police brutality against them.

At one point, Gur asked whether the Jews there would be willing to live under Moslem control in Hebron. "Maybe before 1929," said Arnon, referring to the massacre that killed more than 60 Jews. "But no more."

Asked what would happen when the IDF pulls out of Hebron in accordance with the agreement with the PLO to pull back from Arab population centers, Gur replied that this is a very complicated problem.

Orit Shtruck, a Hebron activist, said the atmosphere with Gur was "very good, as it usually is in meetings with Gur. He is very open and is willing to listen." According to Shtruck, Gur said he would try to look into some of the residents' complaints, but admitted "that he does not always succeed."

Arnon said yesterday's meetings with Gur and Mofaz stem from a meeting Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had last week with a number of settlement leaders, who said that dialogue between the government and Kiryat Arba and Hebron settlers is desperately needed.

Tsubari gets 10 months for suborning witnesses

EYLON Tsubari, former deputy director of Bank Hapoalim's Gmilot Provident Fund, was sentenced to 24 months' imprisonment, 14 of them suspended, by Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yesterday for suborning witnesses and disrupting an investigation.

The three-month period that Tsubari was in custody will be deducted from the 10 months he has to serve in prison.

Judge George Kara also imposed a 14-month suspended sentence on Tsubari, 42, who is also awaiting charges of stock manipulation after an extensive investigation by the Securities Authority.

Defense lawyers Penina Devorin and Dan Qual will probably appeal the severity of the sentence.

Tsubari was originally arrested by the Securities Authority on sus-

RAINE MARCUS

picion of stock manipulation and was remanded for several weeks. But after he was placed under house arrest and then subsequently released on bail, he encouraged other witnesses, also under investigation, to lie to the Securities Authority and to plant false evidence as evidence in court.

Phone calls made by him and his wife, Many, from a public phone box near their home to Germany, to friends and business colleagues Niriel Ben-Yosef and Yigal Meirov, were recorded and later used as evidence in court.

Tsubari was taped asking Ben-Yosef to lie to investigators about foreign currency transferred abroad. But Ben-Yosef later became a state's witness.

Tsubari was rearrested by po-

lice and at first denied the allegations. Defense lawyers Devorin and Qual said their client was "suborned to suborn."

But later Tsubari pleaded guilty and yesterday the lawyers asked Judge Kara to take into consideration his cooperation and his genuine regret for his deeds.

"Our client will carry the mark of Cain for many years to come because of this case," they said.

But in sentencing, Kara said Tsubari intended to disrupt the investigation and interfere with the legal system to conceal his wrongdoings, and therefore deserved punishment accordingly.

Tsubari will meanwhile remain on bail pending appeal, which must be filed within 45 days.

He has not yet been indicted on the original charges of stock manipulation.

Gur: Troops did not flee Gaza mob at Netzarim

EVELYN GORDON

IDF soldiers did not run away when a Palestinian mob rushed their roadblock near Netzarim last week; rather, the soldiers had standing orders to retreat to avoid a confrontation, Deputy Defense Minister Mordechai Gur told the Knesset yesterday, responding to seven motions on the attack.

"We have orders to prevent unnecessary confrontations," he said. "If a large crowd arrives, [the soldiers have orders] to retreat. But they stop a few meters farther down [the road], and from there they don't move... We don't want to get into a situation of mass shooting orders. [The soldiers] acted not only according to orders, but with wisdom."

MKs Nissim Zivili (Labor) and Ran Cohen (Meretz), two sponsors of the motions, said the attack proved that Netzarim is an indefensible security risk, and called on the government to evacuate it. However, Gur rejected the idea.

"I want first of all to get rid of the question of evacuation," he said. "This is not on the agenda. We are not talking about evacuating any settlement."

Gur also rejected Zivili's charge that Israel was undermining the PLO by trying to make it fight Hamas. The PLO, Gur pointed out, accepted responsibility for Gaza's security in the Oslo accords.

"This is a responsibility which [the PLO] took upon itself in the agreement, and it must abide by it," he said. "We're aware of the difficulties... but everyone has difficulties."

However, he said, the key to solving the security problem is enabling the Palestinians to form a strong government: there is no terror on the Egyptian, Jordanian, and Syrian borders, because these countries have governments capable of putting a stop to it.

"Only in Lebanon has the terror not ceased, because there is no government with any strength," he said.

Gur also scored some of the MKs for saying the mob had actually attacked Netzarim.

"We need... a minimum of responsibility, or we will destroy ourselves from within," he said. "There was an incident, and you're turning it into a crisis... Where are these fantasies [about an attack on Netzarim] coming from?"

MKs from the left praised the PLO's action in the Netzarim incident, saying it showed the organization is living up to its promise to protect Israelis against Hamas. Right-wing MKs, however, said the incident showed that the security situation is getting worse under the agreement.

Knesset panel wants attack on Barak, Shahak removed from bill

EVELYN GORDON

THE Knesset Interior Committee will pass a bill mandating a cooling-off period before the chief of general staff and his deputy can become ministers only if sponsor Ron Nahman (Likud) changes the explanatory notes so that they do not constitute an attack on the incumbents, the committee decided yesterday.

Currently, the explanatory notes make it clear that the bill is aimed specifically at Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Ehud Barak and his deputy, Amnon Shahak.

"Today, the chief of general staff and his deputy are involved to a great extent in the diplomatic aspects of the peace process," the notes say. "The fact that they are involved in political negotiations creates such an affinity between them and the government that they can no longer exercise pure

military judgment, independent of their opinions on policy. The fear of hurting the peace process prevents them from taking all possible measures against terror groups..."

"The fact that this is the situation makes it necessary to prevent the chief of General Staff and his deputy from conceding their judgment on security matters to please the government, so that they can join it at the end of their tenure."

Barak, who finishes his term shortly, has been touted as a possible candidate for defense minister.

While many committee members support the idea of the bill - and even advocate expanding it to other senior army and police officers and ministry directors-gener-

al - its personal nature is unacceptable, they said.

Nahman therefore said he would rewrite the notes to make them less personal.

The committee also plans to substantially shorten the cooling-off period from the two years suggested by Nahman. Nahman has already agreed to reduce it to one year, and some of the MKs prefer a period of only three to six months.

The Defense and Justice ministries, however, oppose the bill completely. While Defense Ministry representatives declined to explain their objections - despite questions from committee members - the Justice Ministry said the bill would unfairly discriminate against the chief of general staff, since all other citizens, who can become ministers at any time,

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Runaway tractor kills toddler
Three-and-a-half-year-old Hossem Huzail, of Rahat, was killed yesterday afternoon when a tractor parked beside his parents' home suddenly rolled down a slope and crushed him. Negev police are investigating.

Hevrat Ha'ovdim wants to sell Koor shares
The Histadrut's Hevrat Ha'ovdim holding company yesterday offered for sale 10 percent of its shares and voting rights in the Koor conglomerate. Histadrut Chairman and Hevrat Ha'ovdim board chairman Haim Ramon said the company intends eventually to sell all its holdings in Koor - some 20 percent of shares - and is making this offering as a first step. According to the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, Koor is worth some \$1.1 billion.

Man gets 12-years for raping daughter
A resident of the Haifa suburbs, convicted of raping his 10-year-old daughter, was sentenced to 12 years in prison by Haifa District Court Judge Micha Lindenstrauss yesterday.

Lindenstrauss rejected the psychiatric recommendations which said that a long prison term could send the defendant, 40, into a severe depression in which he could harm himself.

Emergency drill set for Ben-Gurion
A mass emergency drill to prepare for dealing with the results of a crash will be carried out today at Ben-Gurion Airport.

Thirty Magen David Adom ambulances, eight mobile intensive care units, six mobile first-aid stations, and dozens of medics and volunteers will participate. Some 250 "victims" will be treated at the site and be sent to emergency centers for diagnosis and treatment.

Winning numbers and cards
In last night's weekly Lotto drawing, the winning numbers were 1, 6, 19, 23, 28, 37 and the additional number was 12.

In yesterday's Mizit Hapayis daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the jack of spades, 10 of hearts, king of diamonds, and queen of clubs.

Havel at Jews' memorial fears new cycle of horror

PRAGUE (Reuters) - Czech President Vaclav Havel, on the 55th anniversary of the first forced transport of Czech Jews to Nazi-occupied Poland, warned yesterday that every concession to racist bullies threatens to start a new cycle of horrors.

Speaking at the unveiling of a memorial in the eastern city of Ostrava, Havel said that by not confronting evil from the outset, "what we risk is that either we are unable to confront it later or that we can confront it only with new human victims."

"Somewhere, deep in the last casual antisemitic remark or involuntary racist statement, is raised the specter of a gas chamber or pogrom," Havel said. "In every concession to a bully is raised the danger that a new wheel of horrors will begin to turn."

Havel joined the Czech honorary consul in Israel, Hanan Rosen, and Ostrava's Mayor Evzen Tosenovsky in unveiling a granite memorial to local Jews murdered during the Nazi occupation.

On October 17, 1939, about 1,200 Jews from Ostrava were sent to Nisko, 250 kilometers south of Warsaw near the Ukrainian border. Out of the 118,000 Jews who lived in the Czech lands of Bohemia and Moravia in 1939, only about 30,000 survived.

ANGER!

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